



The 3-5-4 Method

The Process Discovery Toolkit

Three signs. Five questions. Four decisions. · One task, start to finish · 45 minutes

The method you will use Monday morning. Research shows employees spend 62% of their time on repetitive tasks (ProcessMaker, 2024). This finds yours. You are describing your own job, so you do not need to know anything about AI to do it.

Write in this. Scribble on it. It is yours.

STEP 1 · Find the Friction

5 minutes

The 3 Signs of AI Opportunity

Think of one task. Tick the signs it shows. Two out of three and it is worth going further.

[] **“We do this every single day”**

Repetitive

Tasks that follow the same pattern consistently, requiring minimal variation or creativity each time.

[] **“This takes forever but it's simple”**

Rules-based, time-consuming

Activities governed by clear logic that consume hours despite being straightforward.

[] **“We're copying from here to there”**

Data transformation

Moving information between systems, reformatting or restructuring without adding new insights.

Score: ____ out of 3

Write it down. Take 60 seconds right now.

Name the one task. This becomes your working example the whole way through.

STEP 2 · Map the Workflow

The 5 Questions

20 minutes

Write it down. Most teams have never documented this, and the writing down is where the answer appears.

TRIGGER What starts this task? Is it scheduled, event-based, or manual?

STEPS What are the actual steps? Document each action in sequence.

HANDOFFS Where does it move between people or systems? These transitions often hide inefficiency.

TIME How long does each step take? Measure, do not estimate.

PAIN POINT Where is the bottleneck, error, or frustration? What makes people groan?

STEP 3 · Decide What to Automate

15 minutes

The 4 Decision Questions

Go back through your steps. Put each one into a box below.

1. Must stay human

Judgement? Exceptions? Relationships? Some decisions require human context and emotional intelligence that AI cannot replicate.

2. Pure data transformation

Input, formula, output. If it follows consistent rules without requiring interpretation, it is perfect for automation.

This box is the one that matters. Anything here is your candidate.

3. Just waiting time

Can we eliminate it? Time spent waiting between steps is pure waste that technology can remove instantly.

4. The 80% case

What is standard? Automate the common scenario, handle exceptions manually.

Perfection is the enemy of progress.

STEP 4 · Your Roadmap

5 minutes

One problem. One pilot. One measurable outcome.

Look at box 2. The step that is pure data transformation, happens often, and annoys you most. That is your first build.

The task I want to build first

What good looks like when it works

Before: how long it takes me today

_____ minutes, _____ times a week

Bring this to your build session. You do not need to know how to build it, only what outcome you want.

A worked example, from a real client

A UK manufacturer with 350+ products. Every time ingredient costs changed, twice a year, someone updated the website, the accounting system and the price lists by hand. It took multiple days and involved the whole team.

Five questions found it. The margin calculations, price updates, PDF generation and notifications were all pure data transformation. The strategic pricing decisions stayed human.

Multiple days became 15 minutes, with a person still approving every change.

Tasks that usually score well on the 3 signs

Common ones, in case they help you spot yours: re-keying an order from an email into the system and then into the invoice; chasing overdue payments and updating the ledger by hand; rebuilding the same monthly report from four separate exports; turning a signed contract into an onboarding pack; checking one system against another before anything gets confirmed.

Ready to build it?

Send me the task you wrote down in Step 4. I'll tell you straight whether AI is the right tool for it. If it is not, I will say so.

chris.duffy@igniteaisolutions.co.uk · www.igniteaisolutions.co.uk