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The Claude Starter Path

Where your business actually sits, and the only next step that matters

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You commented AI. Here it is.

Most owners bounce off AI because they get handed the advanced version on day one. This is the ladder instead. Find your rung, do that one thing, ignore everything above it until it is boring.

Part 1: The four stages

Be honest about which one you are on. Skipping stages is why people quit.

Stage	What it looks like	What it saves	What breaks if you skip ahead
1. Asking	You paste things in and get answers back	An hour or two a week	Nothing. This is the right start.
2. Repeating	You have saved prompts you reuse	Half a day a week	You automate a process you never actually defined
3. Running	It does whole tasks with your files and tools	Several days a month	It touches real client data before you set rules
4. Delegating	Named jobs run on a schedule without you	Whole roles	You cannot tell whether it is working or quietly failing

Most owners who say "AI did not work for us" tried to start at stage 3.

Part 2: Stage 1, done properly

The goal here is not output. It is calibration. You are learning what it is good and bad at, on your actual work.

Do this for a week: 1. Every time you are about to write something from scratch, paste the last version you wrote and ask for the next one. 2. Every time you are about to read something long, paste it and ask for the three things that matter. 3. Keep a note of every answer that was wrong. Not annoying, wrong.

That wrong list is worth more than any course. It tells you exactly where your judgment still has to sit in the loop.

Move on when: you can predict whether it will do a task well before you ask.

Part 3: Stage 2, the saved prompt trap

Everyone builds a prompt library. Almost nobody uses one after month two, because finding the right prompt is slower than retyping it.

Do this instead. For your five most repeated tasks, write down: - What triggers it - The steps, in order - What it must never do

That is not a prompt. That is the beginning of a process document, and it is what stage 3 actually runs on.

Move on when: you have five written like that, and you have used each at least three times.

Part 4: Stage 3, the first real handoff

Pick one task where the input is a file or a message and the output is a draft. Not a decision. A draft.

Good first candidates: - Turning a call recording into notes and next actions - Turning an enquiry into a drafted reply for you to approve - Turning a messy spreadsheet into a summary you can act on

Bad first candidates: anything that sends to a client on its own, anything touching money, anything where a plausible wrong answer is hard to spot.

The rule that keeps this safe: for the first month, everything it produces gets your eyes before it leaves the building. That single rule is what makes stage 3 survivable.

Move on when: you have gone two weeks without correcting it.

Part 5: Stage 4, delegating a job not a task

The jump is from "do this thing" to "own this outcome". A job has a trigger, a schedule, limits, and a way of telling you it ran.

Every delegated job needs four things or it becomes a liability:

Requirement	Why	What happens without it
A named owner in your business	Someone answers for it	It rots silently
Hard limits	It cannot spend, send, or delete beyond a bound	One bad run costs real money
A visible log	You can see what it did	You find out from a client
A kill switch	You can stop it in one move	You unplug something you need

Part 6: What it actually costs

Honest numbers, because the guesses are usually wrong in both directions.

Typical monthly	
Stage 1 to 2	20 to 30 dollars
Stage 3	100 to 200 dollars
Stage 4	200 to 400 dollars, plus the time to maintain it

The cost that catches people is not the subscription. It is the hours in months one and two while you are still writing things down. Budget the hours or you will stall at stage 2 forever.

Do it yourself checklist

- ☐ Circle your honest current stage
 - ☐ Do the stage 1 week, keep the wrong list
 - ☐ Write your five most repeated tasks as trigger, steps, nevers
 - ☐ Pick one draft-producing task for the first real handoff
 - ☐ Set the everything-gets-reviewed rule for month one
 - ☐ Go two weeks without a correction before delegating anything
 - ☐ For any delegated job: owner, limits, log, kill switch
 - ☐ Re-read your wrong list monthly and see what changed
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The part people skip

You do not need the advanced version. You need the next rung and about three weeks of boredom on it.

Every owner I have watched succeed with this went slower at the start than they wanted to. Every one who failed tried to start at the top because that is what the videos show.

If you want to know which rung you are actually on, reply to the DM with what you do and what you have tried. I will tell you straight, including if the answer is that you do not need this yet.