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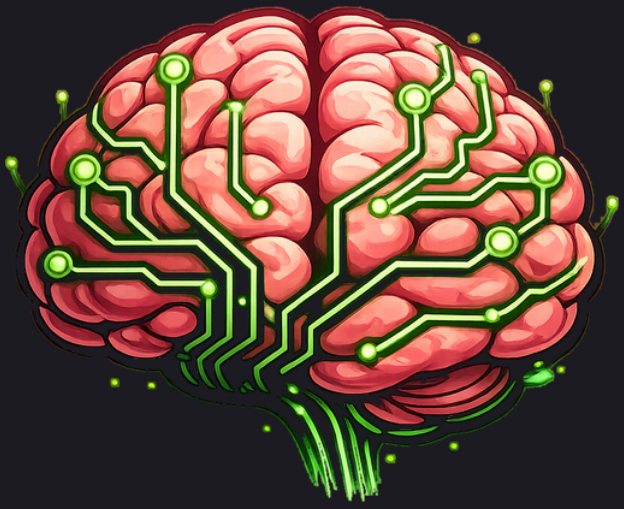

Amalgamind Done Looks Like

Build the smallest version, watch what breaks, and write down what done means.

A companion to Everything Is Words

Brian Baskin

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Build the smallest version, watch what breaks, and write down what done means.

A companion to *Everything Is Words*.

Draft, November 2026. Free to read. Tell us what's wrong: post about it and tag Amalgamind on LinkedIn, X, TikTok or Facebook, or comment in the Amalgamind Community on Skool.

By Brian Baskin.

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Pat, Lou, Jordan, Robin, Sample Mechanical, and everyone around them in this book are invented. Any likeness to a real business or person is chance.

This book is not safety or legal advice.

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How to read this book

"Make me a job tracker." Five words, and each one hides a choice nobody has made. Which jobs? Tracked how? Seen by whom? Done when?

Your AI won't stall on that. It will build something, quickly and cheerfully, that matches your five words and not much else.

This book gets you from a wish to a clear **done**, mostly by making a rough one and watching what happens.

It's a companion to *Everything Is Words*, and it has two readers: you, and your AI. You read each chapter. Your AI reads the part at the end, headed *For your AI*. Every chapter ends with something you can do today, and each of those is a card.

Pat, Lou, Jordan, Robin and Sample Mechanical in these pages are invented.

The one sentence to say

> Help me say what done looks like. Read these files, and let's start on the first card.

Chapter 1: What done looks like

A list of features isn't done. Done is something a person can now do.

A wish	Done looks like
A job tracker	Robin can say which jobs are waiting on a customer, without phoning anyone
A better ticket	The foreman fills it in on site and the office can bill from it
A training sheet	A new person sets up the tool correctly while someone watches

The pattern

Who can **do what**, **how you'd tell**.

Put a number or a limit on it

"Fast" is a wish. "Before the coffee's cold" is closer. "Under a minute" is a test. If you can't put a number on it, name what you'd watch someone do.

One thing

If your sentence needs an *and*, you may have two jobs. Pick the first.

A small example

> *Pat's first try: "better scheduling." Third try: "On Friday, Lou can see Monday's address and parts for each crew on one page."*

Pat and Lou are invented.

Do this today

Say one wish, then turn it into who can do what and how you'd tell. That's card 1.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 1, *Done*.
- Ask: "Who needs to do what?" Then: "How would you tell they did it?"
- Don't add features. Don't accept "better" or "faster" without asking what they'd see.
- Write the sentence in their words.

Chapter 2: Draw the box

Without edges, a small job grows until it never finishes.

Two lists

- **In:** what this covers. Which people, which jobs, which days.
- **Out:** what it deliberately doesn't. Say it, or somebody will assume it.

The **out** list does the most work. It's where you park good ideas without losing them.

Who has a say

Who uses it? Who decides it's good enough? Who is affected without using it? Ask them what they think the words mean. The same two words can be four different jobs in four heads.

Rules that come with it

Anything the law, a customer or your safety program requires goes in the box, from the person responsible for it. Unknown is *to be confirmed*, not skipped.

A small example

> *In: next week, two crews, address and parts. Out: pricing, vacations, anything past Friday.*

An invented entry.

Do this today

Write your in and out lists and name who decides. That's card 2.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 2, *In and out*.
- Ask for what's in, then what's out. Offer things they mentioned and ask which side.
- Ask who decides and who else is affected.
- Supply no legal or safety requirement. Ask who knows.

Chapter 3: The roughest one

You can't fully describe something you've never seen working. So stop describing and make the plainest version that could possibly be tried.

Plain means plain

One person. One case. One result. A page, a list, a sheet drawn by hand. No polish, no connections to anything else.

Give it a short clock

A couple of days at most. If it needs longer, it isn't the roughest one yet.

Use real, safe material

One real case teaches more than a made-up perfect one. Strip private details first, and don't let a rough version send, spend or change anything on its own.

Label it

Write **ROUGH** on it, so nobody mistakes it for the finished thing.

A small example

> *Pat's rough one: a single sheet with two columns, filled in by hand from the calendar. Twenty minutes.*

Pat is invented.

Do this today

Make the roughest version for one case. That's card 3.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 3, *Rough one*.
- Build only what's in the box, for one case. Mark it ROUGH.
- Show blanks as blanks. Add nothing "while you're at it"; list ideas separately.
- It sends, spends and changes nothing.

Chapter 4: Watch their hands

Ask someone if they like it and they'll be kind. Watch them use it and you'll learn something.

How

Hand it to the person who'd really use it, at the time they'd really use it. Say one thing: *"Show me how you'd use this."* Then be quiet.

Notice

- Where they look first.
- What they skip.
- What they reach for that isn't there.
- When they pick up the phone instead.
- What they write on it.

Write what broke

Not what went well. What confused them, what was missing, what they worked around. Each of those is a line of your description, and you could not have written it beforehand.

Be fair

Tell them it's rough and that it's the page being tested, not them.

A small example

> *Lou looked straight past the parts list and phoned the supplier to ask if it had arrived. The page needed one word per part: here, or not.*

Lou is invented.

Do this today

Watch one person use it and write what broke. That's card 4.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 4, *What broke*.
- Ask: "What did they do first?" "What did they skip?" "What did they reach for?"
- Record what happened. Don't explain it away or blame the user.
- Don't fix yet.

Chapter 5: Three cases

Now write it down properly. For each thing it does, three short stories.

Simple, edge, failure

1. **Simple:** an ordinary day, start to finish.
2. **Edge:** unusual but real. Two jobs at one address. A name too long.
3. **Failure:** something's missing, late or wrong. **What should it do then?**

The failure one matters most

The worst kind of failure is the quiet one: old information that looks current, a blank that looks like zero. Say how a person would **know** something's wrong.

Use what you saw

Take your stories from the watching. If you're inventing one, mark it as a guess until it happens.

A small example

> *Failure: the parts list is from Tuesday. The page shows the date at the top, large, so Lou knows it's old.*

An invented entry.

Do this today

Write the three cases for the main thing it does. That's card 5.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 5, *Three cases*.
- Ask for the simple case, then the edge, then the failure and what should happen.
- Mark anything not yet observed as a guess.
- Ask how a person would know it failed.

Chapter 6: Check, then next

Say who checks, against what

Before the next version, write: **who** tries it, **on which cases**, and what counts as a pass. Your three cases are the test.

"We'll try it out" is not a check.

Show it in five minutes

Walk somebody who wasn't there through your done sentence, the box and the three cases. If they can't tell what done means, sharpen the words.

The next change

Every first version is wrong somewhere. Decide now how you'll catch it: where people note what broke, and when you read the notes.

Know when to stop

When the person in your done sentence can do the thing, **stop**. The out list will still be there.

A small example

> *Pass: Lou answers "where am I Monday and is my stuff here" from the page, three Fridays running, without calling.*

Lou is invented.

Do this today

Write the check and the date you'll read the notes. That's card 6.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 6, *The check*.
- Ask who tries it, on which cases, and what passes. Write their answer.
- Compare results with the three cases honestly: pass, fail, not tried.
- When it passes, say so and don't suggest more unless asked.

Where to go next

Take the next wish somebody throws at you and ask: who can do what, and how would we tell?

- **Show it instead of describing it:** *Amalgamind Show Me*.
- **Understand what got built:** *Amalgamind Teach Back*.
- **When the same thing keeps breaking:** *Fix It at the Base*.

Tell us what's wrong

Tell us what broke. It's a draft. Post about it and tag Amalgamind on LinkedIn, X, TikTok or Facebook, or comment in the Amalgamind Community on Skool.

> Who can do what, and how would you tell?