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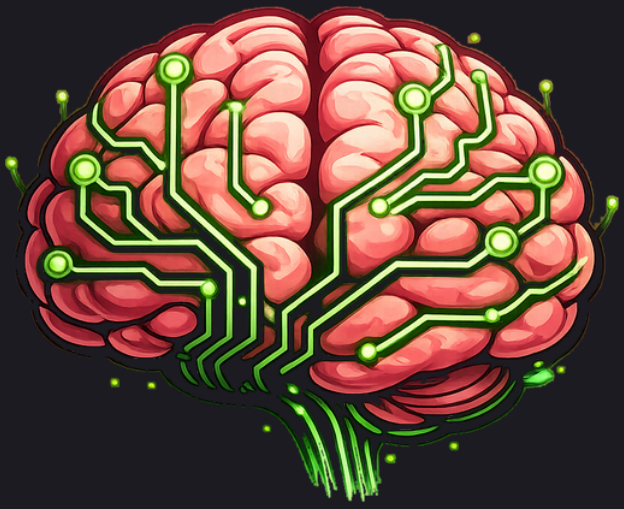

Amalgamind Expert

Write down what only one person knows, in their own words.

A companion to Everything Is Words

Brian Baskin

Amalgamind Expert

Write down what only one person knows, in their own words.

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

AI apps change their menus, their plans and their names often. Where this book talks about an app's settings, check your own app, and ask your AI where things are.

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How to read this book

This is a short book for one kind of person, and for the people who depend on them.

If someone at your place answers the phone when something weird happens, and says "oh, that one, do this first," this book is about them. If that's you, it's about you.

It has two readers: you, and your AI.

You read each chapter to understand it. Your AI reads the part at the end, headed *For your AI*, to know what to do with it. Every chapter ends with something you can do today, and each of those is a card.

What it's for

Everything that person knows is in their head. This book gets it out, in their own words, one small piece at a time, so it stays in the building. You say it out loud. Your AI writes it down. Nobody writes a manual.

Once it's written, your AI can field the questions for you. You stay the authority: your words are what it works from, and nothing goes out in your name without your yes.

How to use it

- One chapter, one card. Do the card before you read on, if you can.
- You can stop any time and pick up later.
- Everyone in the examples, Pat, Lou, Jordan, Robin, Ellis Supply and Sample Mechanical, is invented.
- This book follows *Everything Is Words*. You don't need to have read it first, but it helps.

The one sentence to say

> I want to use my words. Read these files, and let's start on the first card.

Chapter 1: Who do they call?

Think of the last time something weird happened at work. A machine wouldn't start. A customer called upset. A job didn't match the drawing.

Who did you call?

You know the name already. Everyone does. It's the person who answers, and says "oh, that one. Do this first."

The person everybody calls

Every shop, office and crew has one. Sometimes two. They're not always the boss. They're often not the person with the title. They're the person who has done it enough times that they know:

- **The customer who needs a heads-up before a delivery.** Not because it's in a file. Because the last time nobody told him, it got ugly.
- **The machine that has to warm up first.** Skip that, and it runs wrong for an hour and nobody can say why.
- **The breaker that always sticks.** Which one, and what to do about it.
- **The shortcut that saves an hour.** And the one that looks like it saves an hour and costs a day.
- **The thing that's never written down anywhere**, because who has time to write a manual.

That's five kinds. Most people have all five and have never listed one.

Why this is a book

Everything that person knows is in their head. That's fine, until it isn't. This book is about getting it out, in their own words, in an afternoon at a time, so it stays in the building even when they don't.

It's not a software problem. It's a words problem. The knowledge was always there. It just never got said out loud somewhere it could stick.

A small example

Lou is the lead fitter at Sample Mechanical, a pipe-fitting shop. If a job site calls about a flange that doesn't line up, a text goes to Lou. If a supplier shorts an order, somebody asks Lou. If an apprentice is stuck, Lou comes over.

Pat, who owns the shop, once counted. In one week Lou's phone rang eleven times for things only Lou knew. Lou wasn't bothered. Lou was the one who knew.

Then Lou was out three days with the flu. Pat spent the week finding out how much of the shop ran on a phone in one man's pocket.

Pat, Lou and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Write down who it is for your place. One name. Then write five things only they know, one line each, the way they'd say it. Don't polish. If you're the person everybody calls, write yours.

That's card 1. It takes ten minutes, and it's the whole start.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 1, *Who do they call?*
- Ask one question at a time: who do people call when something weird happens, and what do they call about? Use the person's own words for what only that person knows. Say it back before you write it down.
- Write the name and the five things in the person's words. If they gave fewer than five, write fewer. Never invent a thing the person didn't say. Mark anything unsure as *to be confirmed*.
- Don't suggest what to do about it yet. Chapter 4 does that.

Chapter 2: What walks out the door

When the person everybody calls goes away, what they know goes with them. That sounds like something that happens once, at the end of a long career. It doesn't. It happens all the time, in small pieces.

The five ways it leaves

- **They're out sick.** Three days of flu, and the shop finds out how much ran through one phone.
- **They're on vacation.** Everyone says "don't call him," and then calls him.
- **They're on the other job.** They're at the far site all week, and the near site is on its own.
- **They've moved to another crew, another role, or another company.** The know-how goes with the person, not the job.
- **They're just busy.** They're standing right there, but eleven people want them at once, and you're twelfth.

None of those needs anyone to leave for good. All of them cost you the same thing: the answer.

It's not only about leaving

Say nobody ever goes anywhere. You still have a team, and you want everybody rowing in the same direction. If the right way to do the job is in one head, then everyone else is guessing, or waiting in line. Having it written down is a pretty good idea whether anyone is going anywhere or not.

A small example

At Sample Mechanical, Pat made a list on a napkin: the last three times something stopped because Lou wasn't reachable.

- A flange that didn't line up at the hospital job. Two hours, waiting for a text back.
- A supplier who shorted an order. Nobody else knew which of the two suppliers to call first, or why.
- An apprentice who cut a run of pipe to the wrong length. Lou would have caught it in a second.

Pat didn't count dollars. Pat counted hours, and was surprised.

Pat, Lou and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Think of the last three times something stalled because the person everybody calls wasn't there. For each one, write one line: what stalled, and how long it waited. That's card 2.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 2, *What walks out the door*.
- Ask for three times, one at a time. For each: what stalled, who was waiting, how long. Use the person's words. Say it back.
- Don't turn it into dollars unless the person gives you a number. Never invent one.
- Don't frame any of it as someone leaving for good, unless the person says so.

Chapter 3: Why it never got written down

You've thought about it. Somebody should write all this down.

Then you think about writing a manual, and you close the laptop.

Why a manual was never going to work

- **A manual is a big job.** Nobody has a free week. So it waits for a quiet month, and the quiet month doesn't come.
- **A manual is the wrong shape.** The know-how isn't a list of steps. It's "if it's the hospital job, call him first, because last time...". That's a story with a reason in it.
- **The person who knows it is the worst person to write it.** They're the one who's too busy, and they've forgotten what's obvious to them and not to anyone else.
- **Typing it is slower than saying it.** People who can explain a job to a new hire in two minutes can take an hour to write it.

Writing it down felt like extra work. It was extra work, in that form.

What's different now

You don't have to write anything. You have to talk.

If you can explain it to a new hire, you can explain it to your AI. You say it out loud, the way you'd say it on the drive to the job. Your AI asks the next question, writes down what you said in your own words, and reads it back. When it sounds right, it's done.

It's the same words you'd use anyway. They just land somewhere that stays.

A small example

Lou was the last person Pat expected to talk into a microphone. Lou's rule was "if it takes more than two sentences, show me the pipe."

Pat set a timer for two minutes and asked one question: "A flange doesn't line up at a job site. What do you do first?"

Lou answered in about ninety seconds. Pat didn't edit a word. When it was read back, Lou said, "Yeah. That's it. Huh."

Pat's first manual was ninety seconds long.

Pat, Lou and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Pick one thing the person everybody calls knows. Set a two-minute timer. Say it out loud, to your AI or just to a phone, the way you'd say it to a new hire. Don't fix it. That's card 3.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 3, *Two minutes out loud*.
- Take whatever they say as it is. Write it down in their words. Read it back. Ask one question: "Did I get that right?"
- Don't tidy their words or add steps they didn't say. Mark anything unclear as *to be confirmed*.
- Don't ask for more yet. One short answer is the whole job today.

Chapter 4: Say it once

Now the real one. Not two minutes. One whole job, from start to finish.

How an interview works

Pick one job the person everybody calls does a lot. Then your AI does what a sharp new hire would do:

1. **It asks one question at a time.** Not a form. A conversation. "What starts the job?" Then, "And then?" Then, "What can go wrong there?"
2. **It says it back.** After each stretch, it tells you what it heard, in your words. You fix it right there.
3. **It writes it down, in your words.** Not its words. Yours. If you say "the hospital job," it writes "the hospital job."
4. **It marks what you didn't say.** If a step is missing, it writes *to be confirmed*. It never fills the gap with a guess.
5. **It reads the whole thing back at the end.** When you'd put your name to it, it's done.

That's it. It's the same loop for every job.

What comes out

One document, about a page. It looks like what you'd tell a new hire: what starts the job, the steps, who does what, what to watch for, what to do when it goes wrong. It has the reasons in it, because the reasons are the know-how.

A small example

Pat sat with Lou for twenty minutes, with the AI asking the questions.

The job was "a supplier shorts an order." Lou said: check the packing slip first. If it's short, call Ellis Supply, not the other supplier, because Ellis will ship the rest same day and the other one makes you wait a

week. Then tell the foreman before he finds out himself.

The AI asked: "Why Ellis first?" Lou said, "They owe us one. Don't write that down." The AI wrote "Ellis first (reason not for the page)" and moved on.

Twenty minutes, one page, and the page had a reason in it.

Pat, Lou, Ellis Supply and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Pick one job. Have the interview. Let your AI ask the questions. Say it back, fix it, and read the finished page. That's card 4.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 4, *The first interview*.
- Ask one question at a time. Say it back after each stretch. Use their words.
- If they say something is off the record, keep it off the page and say that you did.
- Never fill a gap. Write *to be confirmed*.
- Save it as a file named for the job. Read it back. Do not send it anywhere. Do not share it with anyone but the person.

Chapter 5: The critical steps

Some know-how is nice to have written down. Some of it isn't.

What a critical step is

A critical step is a moment where something gets handed over, and if the rule is only in someone's head, the wrong thing can happen.

- Power gets switched on or off.
- A decision gets passed from one person to the next.
- Knowledge gets passed from a person who has it to a person who doesn't.
- A guard comes off, or goes back on.

In some trades, getting a critical step wrong means a wasted day. In others, it means someone gets hurt. The person everybody calls knows which is which. That's why they get the call.

Why these come first

If the rules for a critical step live in one head, then on the day that person isn't there, whoever is standing at the switch is guessing. Nobody should be guessing at a critical step.

So these get written first, before the shortcuts and the customer notes. Same method: say it out loud, your AI asks one question at a time, it writes it in your words, you read it back.

Two extra rules for these pages:

- **Your AI never decides a critical step.** It writes down the rule. A person carries it out.
- **A person signs these off.** Not your AI, and not whoever happens to be reading. The person everybody calls reads it, and says "yes, that's how it's done."

A small example

At Sample Mechanical, Lou's critical steps were short: before anyone cuts into a pressurized line, the line is isolated, tagged and checked dead by one person, and a second person looks at the tag before the first cut.

Pat had never seen it in one place. It was in Lou's head, and in the apprentice's habits, because Lou showed them. The AI wrote it down in Lou's words, in six lines. Lou read it, changed one word, and said, "That's it. That's the one."

Pat printed it and put it on the wall.

Pat, Lou and Sample Mechanical are invented, and so is this rule. It shows the shape of a written critical step. It is not a safety procedure for any real job. Follow your own trade's rules, and the people who own them.

Do this today

List your critical steps, as short as you can. For each one, one line: what's handed over, and what has to be true first. Don't write the rule yet. Just list them. That's card 5.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 5, *The critical steps*.
- Ask one question at a time: what gets handed over, and what must be true before it does? Use their words. Say it back.
- Write the list. Never write a rule the person didn't say. Never add a safety step of your own. If you think one is missing, ask, and let the person decide.
- Mark the file *not yet signed off*. Only the person everybody calls, or the owner, can sign it off.
- Never act on a critical step. You write it down. You don't carry it out.

Chapter 6: Move the decision closer to the work

Once the right way is written down, something else becomes possible. The decision can move.

Where decisions sit today

Most decisions sit where the answer lives. If only Lou knows whether the flange is acceptable, then every flange question goes to Lou. The decision isn't at the job. It's wherever Lou's phone is.

That's slow, and it makes Lou a bottleneck. It's not Lou's fault. It's the only place the answer was.

What moving it means

When the rule is in words, the person on the job can read it. They don't have to ask. The decision moves a step closer to the work, to the person with their hands on it.

It doesn't move everything. It moves the ones where the rule is clear:

- **If the rule is clear and the stakes are small,** the person on the job decides, using the page.
- **If the rule is clear and the stakes are high,** the person on the job decides, and a second person checks.
- **If the rule isn't clear yet,** it still goes to the person everybody calls. And what they say becomes the next line on the page.

Over time, fewer things need the call. Not because the person is less needed. Because their answers are in everyone's hands.

A small example

The flange question at Sample Mechanical used to be a text to Lou. Now it's a page: *a flange is acceptable if it lines up within this much; if it doesn't, stop and call.* Jordan, the apprentice, reads it on the job and decides.

The first week, Jordan called Lou twice instead of nine times. One of the two calls was something the page didn't cover, so Lou said it out loud, and the page got a new line.

Lou's phone rang less. Lou was glad.

Pat, Lou, Jordan and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Pick one decision that always goes to the person everybody calls, where the rule is clear. Write it as one line: *when this happens, the person on the job does that.* Don't hand it over yet. Just write the line, and read it to the person. That's card 6.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 6, *Move one decision*.
- Ask: which decision goes to this person most, and what's the rule? Say it back. Write the line in their words.
- Never move a decision yourself. Write the line, and the person decides whether it goes live.
- If the stakes are high, say so in one line, and ask who checks.
- Don't change what the person told you. If the rule isn't clear, write *to be confirmed*.

Chapter 7: Everybody rowing the same way

You don't need anyone to be going anywhere for this to matter.

One way, in everyone's hands

Say your whole team is here, healthy, and staying. You still have a problem if the right way to do the job is in one head, and everyone else does it a little differently. Nobody's wrong, exactly. They're just not rowing together.

When the way is written down, in plain words, in your own words, everyone can see it. The new hire and the veteran read the same page. The job gets done the same way whoever does it.

It's the page that does the work

This isn't about forcing people. It's about giving them something to point at.

- **A new person has somewhere to start.** They're not waiting for someone to have time.
- **Two people who disagree have somewhere to look.** "Is that how we do it?" "Let's check the page." And if the page is wrong, they say so, and it gets fixed.
- **The person everybody calls stops being the only source.** They're still the expert. They're just not the only door.

A small example

Pat handed Jordan the page for the supplier problem, and one other: how to log a delivery. Jordan had been doing it two ways. The crew had three.

Robin, who runs the office, said, "I've been trying to get everyone to do it one way for a year." The page did it in a week, because it was the crew's own way, in Lou's own words, not a rule from the office.

Pat, Lou, Jordan, Robin and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Pick one page you already have, from card 4. Hand it to one person who does that job, and ask one question: "Is this how you do it?" Write down what they change. That's card 7.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 7, *Hand one page to one person*.
- Help them pick one page and one person. Draft a one-line question they can say or send. Don't send it for them.
- Write down what the second person changes, in that person's words. Don't decide who's right. Show both versions, side by side, and let the owner decide.
- Never delete the earlier version. Keep both, dated.

Chapter 8: What it's worth

Think about what you've made so far. A page a person said out loud, read back, and fixed. It was in one head, and now it's a thing.

A thing you keep

Know-how that's written down stops being only a worry. It's something you hold. You can:

- **Keep it.** It's still there next year.
- **Use it.** Your AI works from it every day, so the job gets done your way.
- **Share it.** You decide with whom: the crew, a new hire, a customer, another shop.
- **Build on it.** Every correction makes the next version better.

If you're the person everybody calls, your know-how isn't only a burden people lean on. It's something you made, and it belongs to you.

What this chapter does not say

It doesn't promise money. Some people will find a way to share what they know and be paid for it. Some won't want to. That's yours to decide, later, and nothing in this book needs it.

It also doesn't say to share everything. Some pages are only for your own shop. Some have customer details or off-the-record reasons. Those stay with you.

A small example

Lou's pages ended up in three piles: **ours only** (the supplier reasons), **the crew** (the flange rule, the delivery log), and **anyone** (a page on how to read a drawing, which Lou was proud of).

Pat asked Lou which pile each one belonged in. Lou decided. Pat didn't argue.

Lou printed the drawing page and gave it to a friend at another shop. Lou said it felt good, in a way a manual never had.

Pat, Lou and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Go through your pages and put each in one of three piles: **ours only**, **the crew**, or **anyone**. Don't share anything yet. Just sort. That's card 8.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 8, *Sort into three piles*.
- Read their pages with them, one at a time. For each, ask: ours only, the crew, or anyone? Write down their answer in their words.
- Never share a page, and never move one out of "ours only". Only the person does that.
- Flag anything with a customer's name, a price, or something marked off the record, and ask before it goes in any pile but "ours only".
- Don't talk about money unless the person does. Never suggest a price.

Chapter 9: Your first week

You've got the idea. Here's a way to start Monday.

The week

One small thing a day, about twenty minutes, for five days.

- **Monday: Name the person.** Do card 1: who do they call, and the five things only they know.
- **Tuesday: Count the cost.** Card 2: the last three times something stalled.
- **Wednesday: Two minutes out loud.** Card 3: one thing, said once, in your words.
- **Thursday: The first job.** Card 4: one whole job, interviewed, read back, and fixed.
- **Friday: The critical steps.** Card 5: list the ones where something is handed over.

Saturday or the next Monday, take ten minutes and look back: what's on the page, what's wrong, and what to say next. Cards 6, 7 and 8 are for the weeks after, one at a time, when you're ready.

The look back

At the end of the first week, ask three questions:

1. **Did it go to plan?** Did you do the five cards, or most of them?
2. **Did anything surprise you?** Was there something the person knew that you didn't expect?
3. **What's the next job?** Which one would you write down next?

Write the answers on one line each. That's the whole review.

A small example

Pat ran the week with Lou, twenty minutes a day over coffee. By Friday there were four pages and a list of critical steps. Lou had changed two words and rewritten none.

The surprise: the apprentice, Jordan, read the pages on his own and asked a question Lou had never been asked, about why the crew isolates the line before the tag check. It was a good question, and the answer went on the page.

Pat's look back was three lines. The next job was "customer who needs a heads-up before delivery."

Pat, Lou, Jordan and Sample Mechanical are invented.

Do this today

Put the five days on your calendar, one a day, for the next five days you're working. Say who you'll do it with. That's card 9.

For your AI

- This chapter serves card 9, *Run the week*.
- Help them put five twenty-minute slots on their calendar, one per day. Draft the entries. Don't add them to anyone else's calendar, and don't send invitations without a yes.
- On the last day, ask the three look-back questions, one at a time, and write the answers in their words.
- Don't start the next job for them. Ask which one, and wait.

Where to go next

If you did the week, you have four or five pages, a list of critical steps, and a look back. That's a real start.

Next

- **Keep going, one job a day.** Pick the next job from your look back and do card 4 again.
- **Hand the pages out.** Cards 7 and 8 are the next two: one page to one person, then three piles.
- **Read *Everything Is Words*.** It's the book this one follows, about writing down how you work so an AI can work beside you. It's free to read.
- **Tell us what's wrong.** This is a draft, and it's free. If something here is wrong or says it badly, post about it and tag Amalgamind on LinkedIn, X, TikTok or Facebook, or comment in the Amalgamind Community on Skool. Your words make it better.

You already knew all of this. Now it's written down.