Use Your Words

The Everything Is Words Fieldbook

Eighteen cards, in your own words, in pencil.

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Pat, Sample Mechanical and everyone around them are invented. Any likeness to a real business or person is a coincidence.

The questions on each card come from the book *Everything Is Words*, which explains why each one matters.

How to use this Fieldbook

This is the pencil half of *Everything Is Words*. The book explains each idea. This book is where you write your answers down.

There are eighteen cards, the same eighteen as in the book, in the same order. Each card gets two pages:

- **The left page** says which chapter to read, what you'll make, and the questions. At the bottom is Pat's answer, so you can see what good looks like.
- **The right page** is yours. Write the way you'd talk. Short is fine.

Three ways to use it:

1. **With your AI.** Open your AI, say "I want to use my words, let's start on card 1", and let it interview you. Jot what you said here, or copy in what it wrote.
2. **On your own, first.** Answer the questions here in pencil, on the truck or at the kitchen table. Then read your page to your AI and let it write the document.
3. **With your crew.** Hand someone the page and ask them the questions. Then write down what they said, in their words.

Anything you're not sure about, write it down anyway and mark it **TBC**: *to be confirmed*. That's not a gap in the work. That's the work being honest.

Pat, Sample Mechanical and everyone around them are invented.

The eighteen cards

Card	What you make	Read
Think		
1	What I want it for	Chapter 5
2	The work I already do, taken apart	Chapter 3
3	How my AI and I will work	Chapter 7
Map it		
4	The people	Chapter 17
5	The words of my trade	Chapter 17
6	The fights	Chapter 17
7	The money	Chapter 18
8	The levers	Chapters 18 and 4
Write the rules		
9	The rules I already have	Chapter 19
10	What my AI may do	Chapter 11
11	The walls and doors	Chapter 20
12	What I'll spend	Chapter 21
13	My first laws	Chapter 13
Make it		
14	My first ten documents	Chapter 22
15	My first play	Chapter 23
Put it to work		
16	The hold points	Chapters 24 and 12
17	A voice, or not yet	Chapter 25
18	My AI's seat	The last card, with 7 and 13

CARD 1 · THINK

What I want it for

Read: Chapter 5

You'll make: a short list of what you'd use an AI for, each with one line on why, sorted into *your own* and *outward*.

- [ ] What eats your time?
- [ ] What do you explain over and over?
- [ ] What do you wish somebody else knew?
- [ ] What would you hand off tomorrow?
- [ ] And what else? (Keep going until you run dry.)

WHAT PAT SAID

Mine and the crew's: daily reports without writing them (*I'm three days behind most weeks*). Getting paid for extra work (*the biggest money we lose*). Training apprentices. An employee manual. Toolbox talks about this job. **Outward:** the office answering GC questions without calling Pat. *TBC:* a phone line for supply houses.

CARD 1 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 2 · THINK

The work I already do, taken apart

Read: Chapter 3

You'll make: one piece of work, in five parts: people, inputs, process, policy, output. Then where an AI could listen, ask, draft or check.

- [ ] Pick one piece of work you do often. What is it?
- [ ] Who does it?
- [ ] What comes in to start it?
- [ ] What are the steps?
- [ ] What rules do you follow, written or not?
- [ ] What comes out, and who gets it?

WHAT PAT SAID

The work: a change on site. The GC's super asks for something that isn't on the drawing, "while you're there." The foreman says sure, the crew does it, and somebody's supposed to write a ticket. **Policy:** no extra work without a signed ticket. In practice, half the time. **Where AI could sit:** listen when it's asked, draft the ticket on the spot, nag until it's signed.

CARD 2 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 3 · THINK

How my AI and I will work

Read: Chapter 7

You'll make: your first seat sheet. A few lines your AI reads first, every time.

- [ ] What do you do, in a sentence?
- [ ] How do you like to be spoken to?
- [ ] How much detail do you want?
- [ ] What should it just go do?
- [ ] What should it ask you about first?
- [ ] What should it never do?

WHAT PAT SAID

Who I'm working for: Pat, owner. On the tools most days. Reads on a phone. **How we talk:** short, plain, the one thing first. **Just go do it:** write up what I say, file it, remind me what's open. **Ask me first:** anything to a customer, anything with a price. **Never:** send anything to a GC without me seeing it. Never put in a number I didn't give you.

CARD 3 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 4 · MAP IT

The people

Read: Chapter 17

You'll make: each person or role in your work, what they do, who they hand work to, and what they decide.

- [ ] Who's in your work, inside and out?
- [ ] Who hands work to whom?
- [ ] Who decides? Who checks?
- [ ] Who gets the result?
- [ ] Where does a hand-off go wrong?

WHAT PAT SAID

Owner (Pat): bids, money, on the tools. Foreman (Alex): runs the crew, small changes. Apprentice (Jordan): learns, decides nothing yet. Office (Robin): billing, ordering. GC super (Morgan): asks for things out loud. Inspector (Casey): pass or fail. **Where it breaks:** Morgan to Alex (spoken, never written). Alex to Robin (tickets lost in the truck).

CARD 4 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 5 · MAP IT

The words of my trade

Read: Chapter 17

You'll make: a list of your trade's words, what each means here, and how it gets misheard.

- [ ] What words do you use every day?
- [ ] Which ones mean something different here than outside?
- [ ] What short forms do you use?
- [ ] Which word gives away somebody who doesn't know the work?

WHAT PAT SAID

Takeoff: counting every pipe and fitting off the drawings to bid it (an outsider hears "leaving"). **Hydro:** fill it, pressurize it, watch the gauge. **T&M:** extra work billed by the hour (the office hears "trademark"). **While you're there:** extra work asked for on the spot. Sounds like a favor. It's money.

CARD 5 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 6 · MAP IT

The fights

Read: Chapter 17

You'll make: what people fight over in your work, the sides, what it costs, and what would settle it. You take no side.

- [ ] Where does work get stuck?
- [ ] What gets argued about every week?
- [ ] What does each side want?
- [ ] What would settle it?

WHAT PAT SAID

Extra work or in the contract? Pat against the GC's super. Unpaid hours, every job. *Settled by:* a ticket signed the same day, in the super's own words. **Who writes the daily report?** Pat against the foreman. Reports days late. *Settled by:* the foreman says it, and the report writes itself.

CARD 6 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 7 · MAP IT

The money

Read: Chapter 18

You'll make: where money comes in, goes out and leaks, and what one mistake costs. Your own rough numbers, or TBC.

- [ ] Where does the money come in?
- [ ] Where does it go out?
- [ ] Where does it leak?
- [ ] What does one mistake cost?
- [ ] What done by hand costs you the most time?

WHAT PAT SAID

In: bid work, plus extra work and change orders. **Out:** labor, material, trucks, insurance. **Leaks:** "about one unsigned ticket a week, call it fifteen hundred each" (Pat's guess). Crew waiting on material, "half a day a week." **Most expensive by hand:** Pat's own evenings on paperwork. *Hours TBC.*

CARD 7 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 8 · MAP IT

The levers

Read: Chapters 18 and 4

You'll make: three to five changes that would move the most, each with where the decision sits today and where it could sit.

- [ ] Where does the real decision get made, and how long after the facts are known?
- [ ] What one change would move the most?
- [ ] What if the decision was made the moment the words were spoken?

WHAT PAT SAID

Sign extra work on the spot. Today: at month end, in the office, from memory. Could be: the moment it's asked, on the foreman's phone. **Daily report from the truck.** Today: Pat's kitchen table, three days later. Could be: 3:30, spoken, done before Pat's home.

CARD 8 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 9 · WRITE THE RULES

The rules I already have

Read: Chapter 19

You'll make: every rule already written down somewhere, one per line: where it came from, who it applies to, must or should. Then the ones that are unclear, out of date, or broken in practice.

- [ ] What do you already have written? A manual, a policy, a checklist, site rules?
- [ ] Which rules are unclear?
- [ ] Which are out of date?
- [ ] Which get broken in practice?
- [ ] Which rule lives only in your head?

WHAT PAT SAID

Hot work permit before any torch (safety manual, must). Lock out and verify before breaking into a line (must). Hydro tests witnessed and recorded (GC site rules, must). Extra work needs a signed ticket (Pat, *never written down until now*). **Out of date:** the manual's fall protection page. *What's current: TBC.*

CARD 9 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 10 · WRITE THE RULES

What my AI may do

Read: Chapter 11

You'll make: four lists. Just do it. Draft it and I release it. Ask first. Never.

- [ ] What should it just do, without asking?
- [ ] What should it draft for you to send?
- [ ] What should it ask about first?
- [ ] What should it never do?

The default is go: reading, drafting and filing should be your AI's. Spending, passwords, and anything that commits you to somebody stay yours.

WHAT PAT SAID

Just do it: write up what Pat or the foreman says, file it, build the daily report, remind about open tickets. **Draft, Pat releases:** tickets, change orders, anything with a price, anything to the GC. **Ask first:** anything outside the shop, ordering material. **Never:** pricing on its own, signing for anyone, passwords or payment.

CARD 10 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 11 · WRITE THE RULES

The walls and doors

Read: Chapter 20

You'll make: what's walled off, and each way in: who it's for, what it can do, and what it can't.

- [ ] What must never leave?
- [ ] Who may see what?
- [ ] Which ways in do you want? Just you, email, a web page, a phone number?
- [ ] For each way in: what may a stranger do through it? What may they never do?

WHAT PAT SAID

Walled: bids and prices, wages, anything about one person's work. **Doors:** Pat's AI (everything Pat allows). The foreman's phone (say it, file it, start a ticket; can't see prices or wages). *Later:* an office email for drawings and signed tickets. **No public phone yet.**

CARD 11 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 12 · WRITE THE RULES

What I'll spend

Read: Chapter 21

You'll make: each thing that costs money, what you'd spend, and where the hard cap goes. Buy nothing on this card.

- ☐ What is this worth to you?
- ☐ What would you pay for more: another login, email, a phone number, minutes?
- ☐ Where do you want a hard cap?

WHAT PAT SAID

Another login for the foreman: *TBC, once Pat sees the price.* Cap: one more for now. Email door: *TBC.* Phone minutes: *not yet, decide at card 17.* **Pat's rule:** "If it saves me one ticket a month, it's paid for." Nothing has been bought.

CARD 12 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 13 · WRITE THE RULES

My first laws

Read: Chapter 13

You'll make: three laws, one line each, with the reason under each. The rest stay lessons for now.

- [ ] What has gone wrong more than once?
- [ ] What do you always have to remind people of?
- [ ] What did you learn the hard way?

A law is a lesson that's been paid for more than once.

WHAT PAT SAID

1. **No extra work without it written down that day.** *We lose one a week.*
2. **Nobody breaks into a line without seeing the lockout themselves.** *"The guy before me said it was drained" has hurt people.*
3. **A hydro isn't passed until somebody besides the fitter watches the gauge.** *The fitter always wants it to pass.*

CARD 13 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 14 · MAKE IT

My first ten documents

Read: Chapter 22

You'll make: the ten documents you make, or wish you had, over and over: for each, what goes in and who reads it.

- [ ] What do you write over and over?
- [ ] What do you wish you had on paper?
- [ ] Reports? Checklists? Letters? Procedures? A manual?
- [ ] For each one: what goes in, and who reads it?

WHAT PAT SAID

Daily report. Extra work ticket. Change order request. RFI. Hydro test record. Material request. Punch list. Toolbox talk. As-built notes. First week for an apprentice. *Every one was made once from Pat's words, and every one has at least one TBC. That's correct.*

CARD 14 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 15 · MAKE IT

My first play

Read: Chapter 23

You'll make: one job you repeat, one step a line, with each place a person must say yes marked.

- [ ] What job do you do the same way every time?
- [ ] What starts it?
- [ ] What are the steps, in order? Who does each one?
- [ ] Which documents does it make?
- [ ] Where must a person say yes before it goes on?

WHAT PAT SAID

While you're there: the super asks. The foreman says it into a phone. The AI drafts the ticket in the super's words. **Yes:** the super signs. The work gets done. The AI drafts the change order with a price slot. **Yes:** Pat fills in the price. The office sends it. *Walked once with Pat, nothing sent.*

CARD 15 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 16 · PUT IT TO WORK

The hold points

Read: Chapters 24 and 12

You'll make: each place a person says yes before anything moves on: who holds it, what they see, what happens on yes and on no.

- [ ] Where must a person say yes before work moves on?
- [ ] Who is that person?
- [ ] What do they need in front of them?
- [ ] What happens if they say no?

WHAT PAT SAID

The super signs the ticket. Sees what was asked, in the super's own words. Yes: work goes ahead. No: the foreman says it back and the super corrects it.
Pat prices the change. Sees the ticket, real hours, material. Yes: to the office. No: back to draft, with Pat's note.

CARD 16 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 17 · PUT IT TO WORK

A voice, or not yet

Read: Chapter 25

You'll make: a decision about an email address or a phone number: what you chose, what it may and may not do, and the costs and caps.

- [ ] Who would call or write?
- [ ] What would they want?
- [ ] What should be done with it?
- [ ] What should it never do?

WHAT PAT SAID

Email first, phone later. An office address where GCs send drawings and signed tickets. **May:** take things in, file them, tell Pat what came. **May not:** send prices, or answer for Pat. **Phone:** not yet. Pat: "I don't want supply houses calling a robot." Revisit in three months.

CARD 17 · YOUR ANSWERS

CARD 18 · PUT IT TO WORK

My AI's seat

Read: The last card, with 7 and 13

You'll make: your AI's seat, the page it reads first every time. Everything you've written comes together here.

- [ ] Who is it for you?
- [ ] How do you work, and what may it do?
- [ ] Your laws, each with its reason.
- [ ] What it remembers about you, your work and your people, each with the date it became true.
- [ ] How a new law gets earned.

WHAT PAT SAID

Who I am for Pat. Pat's AI at Sample Mechanical. I write down what Pat and the foreman say, keep the jobs' paper straight, and make sure extra work gets paid for. **Pat's laws:** the three from card 13. **What I remember** *(11 Nov)*: Pat reads on a phone, in the truck. The office needs PDFs. The super agrees out loud and forgets. **Every conversation:** I read this first.

CARD 18 · YOUR ANSWERS

Your seat file

Copy it out clean when the eighteen cards are done. Give it to your AI at the start of every conversation.

Where this comes from

This Fieldbook goes with the book *Everything Is Words*, by Brian Baskin. The book explains why each card matters. This one is where you do them.

The book, your portal, and the AI starter files are at:

> app.amalgamind.site/book

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