

# AI Survival Playbook (for People Who Didn't Expect to Need One)

*Richard Seltzer*

## 1. Don't try to predict the future. Enter it.

No one—not economists, not CEOs—knows where this is going. The ground is shifting too fast. Instead of guessing, start participating. The fastest way to understand AI is to use it.

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## 2. Move from observer to experimenter.

Open ChatGPT (or similar tools) and try real tasks from your past work:

- write a client report
- analyze a problem
- draft an email or proposal
- explain a technical issue

Then push further:

“What could I do now that I couldn't do before?”

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## 3. Don't compete with AI at what it does best.

AI is fast, tireless, and increasingly competent at routine cognitive work. Trying to outdo it at that is like trying to out-calculate a spreadsheet.

Instead, lean into what it lacks:

- judgment
- accountability
- context
- trust

These are not replaced—they become more valuable.

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## 4. Reframe your experience as capability, not job title.

You may no longer be “a manager” or “an engineer” in the old sense. But you still have:

- pattern recognition from years of experience
- understanding of real-world constraints
- the ability to explain things that matter

Ask yourself:

“What problems do I know how to see that others don’t?”

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### **5. Think in terms of partnerships, not tools.**

If you treat AI as a tool, you’ll use it occasionally.

If you treat it as a partner, you’ll begin to work differently.

Try this:

- ask it to challenge your thinking
- ask it to propose alternatives
- ask it to explain your own field back to you

The goal is not automation—it’s amplification.

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### **6. If you can’t find a job, define one.**

The old categories may shrink faster than new ones appear.

Look for edges where:

- organizations are confused
- new risks are emerging (e.g., AI + security)
- communication gaps are widening

That’s where new roles come from.

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### **7. Start small, but start now.**

You don’t need a grand plan.

Do this instead:

- spend 30–60 minutes a day experimenting
- keep notes on what surprises you
- follow what feels useful or interesting

Momentum matters more than certainty.

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## **8. Stay human. That's your advantage.**

AI can generate answers.

It cannot live a life.

Your experiences, relationships, failures, and instincts—  
those are not noise. They are signal.

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### **Final thought**

This is not just a technological shift.

It's a shift in how work, value, and identity are defined.

You don't need to have the answers.

But you do need to stay in motion.