

Participant Case Study Nicholas

This case study explores Nicholas's experience with the AI Blueprint Accelerator program, detailing his motivations for joining, his journey through the course, and the concrete value he derived.

1. Why Nicholas Joined the Programme

Nicholas, a self-described utilitarian when it comes to technology, felt a "good shove over the edge" was needed to engage with AI. His motivations were multifaceted, spanning personal, familial, and professional aspirations.

- **Personal and Familial Growth:** Nicholas expressed a desire to understand AI's impact on his children, including a teenager, a 21-year-old, and a baby on the way, wanting to be part of the conversation in a meaningful way as his youngest child would be "raised in AI". He aimed to learn how AI could make his personal life "more effective and meaningful". Initially, he found the whole AI concept "a little ick" and "kind of weird".
- **Professional Development and Career Transition:** Working at a transition center for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Nicholas saw the potential to use AI to "really boost educational opportunities". He was also in a career transition, possibly becoming a special education teacher, and hoped the program would help "unlock who am I, my values and whatnot, and how might I want to make money or give my time in a vocational sense". He admitted to feeling "sort of blocked" regarding clarity on his future work.
- **Managing Multiple Responsibilities:** Nicholas described having "too many irons in the fire," including his current job, a small balloon artist business he was trying to automate, school, and preparing for a new baby. He faced challenges with manual processes across various platforms for communication, subcontractor management, S corp taxes, and calendar integrations.

2. Nicholas's Experience on the Programme

Nicholas's journey through the AI Blueprint Accelerator was transformative, moving him from a novice to a confident user.

- **Rapid Learning and Increased Confidence:** He stated, "I went from knowing nothing about AI to having a great understanding of the landscape and coupled with that like confidence". This shift began as early as the introductory webinar. Within the first week, he was "blown away at the capabilities" of AI.
- **Appreciation for the Human-Centric Approach:** A key aspect that resonated with Nicholas was the program's "focus on the human and, and developing the human, uh, sense of self value, vision, all of that before coming to technology". He emphasized wanting to come to AI with his own power and boundaries, rather than letting it "suck the life out of people".
- **Programme Structure and Delivery:** He found the course's webpage layout "very crisp and clear," with all resources accessible on one page, which he found very helpful. The visuals were "stunning". He also appreciated the provision of transcripts, which allowed him to engage with the material deeply without the stress of missing information. While acknowledging some redundancy, he found it beneficial for deeper learning as a newcomer to AI.

- **Cohort Dynamics:** Although initially feeling a "little daunting" being in a seminar with people who seemed to be "doing way bigger things," Nicholas found the cohort experience positive, noting that "everybody was really kind".
- **Engagement and "Aha!" Moments:** During a Q&A call in Module 2, Nicholas shared several "wins," including using AI for a 15-minute audio reflection that helped him develop a weekly plan with practical and reflective elements, and create a "one-pager" vision letter to his future family, complete with a nature-focused AI-generated image. He felt the program's timing was "amazing" given his career and family transitions.

3. Concrete Value Derived from the Programme

Nicholas articulated several concrete benefits and skills gained from his participation:

- **Practical AI Application:** He learned to create images with AI, making one for his best friend's birthday and another interactively with a student in a car. He also used AI to design a meal plan for 20 people, though he noted the proportions were off.
- **Enhanced Writing and Content Creation:** He moved beyond basic AI uses like resume assistance to a more nuanced understanding of co-creating with AI, ensuring authenticity by inputting his own writings for style guidance. He also used AI to create lesson plans, for instance, to learn about Estonian spirituality and culture.
- **Valuable Frameworks and Tools:** The AI Compass was a standout tool for Nicholas: "I really love the compass. I think the compass is fantastic... it is going to be a tool I use for a long time". He found it comprehensive, helping him "wrap my head around the possibilities" and identify learning edges. He is using ChatGPT daily and plans to use HeyGen for videos and other tools like Canva and Brisk in his teaching role. He's also exploring automation tools like Zapier and Relay App.
- **Increased Effectiveness and Future Readiness:** Nicholas feels the program set him up to "be one really good at my job" and "a leader with AI in the classroom". He intends to use AI for automating tasks he doesn't enjoy, such as writing and assessment in his special education role, and to help him get "unstuck". He is also applying AI to automate and develop a new landing page and system for his balloon business.
- **Personal Clarity and Empowerment:** The course provided "clarity on what's out there," how to stay updated, and a "rock solid base for why am I coming to AI or why am I not using AI for certain things". He felt "very well resourced" and experienced a "strong energy rise", stating the program helped enhance his "imagination and creative capabilities". He's also better prepared to guide his daughter in navigating the world of AI