



Planning For The Unexpected

Cheat Sheet



Planning for the unexpected

Be ready for when things don't go according to plan

Handling Failure

1

Understanding what type of failure can occur when using your bot

- 3 types of errors: **Misrecognition, Task failure, Timeouts.**
- Unexpectedness takes the form of **anything that is not part of the Happy Path planned for the user**, like users doing **smalltalk** with the bot or **testing its limits**.
- **General steps for error handling:**
 - 1st try - Ask to rephrase their query using the **retry message** functionality.
 - 2nd try - Provide guidance on next steps or offer to connect to a live agent.
 - 3rd try - Give up and connect to a real person.
 - If no HITL: Give up but ask the user if they want to continue or give it another shot. Make sure to **add a transition to handle failure** in the **advanced settings** of your capture information card.

Task Failure

2

How to handle failures when the bot understood the user

- The bot **doesn't resolve the issue even if it understands it**. Includes API issues, code exceptions, database connection problems, missing criteria for search, etc.
- Good practice is to have **as precise an error message as possible** (e.g. tell user why something failed).
- Depending on failure, either **offer alternate solutions** (e.g. with buttons), or **offer guidance** so that task can be successful (e.g. tell user which criteria is missing).

Misrecognition

3

How to handle inputs the bot misunderstands

- The bot **misinterprets the user's input**.
- Discovered usually through **explicit** or **implicit confirmation** after user input.
- **Explicit confirmation:** bot asks user to confirm when stakes are high.
- **Implicit confirmation:** bot confirms its understanding directly in the conversation, with no interruption, which happens when stakes are low.
- Possibility to build a **self-learning bot** to improve future answers ([tutorial](#)).

Handling Timeouts

4

How to handle the absence of input for a long period of time

- **Several potential reasons:** user has another conversation, walked away and wants to continue later, etc.
- Can be handled with a **kind reminder**, **depending on timeout value:** googly eyes emojis, asking questions in other words (e.g.: by using AI generate text card).

Smalltalk

5

How to handle unexpected, simple conversations

- Have a **kb ready** to specifically handle smalltalk, **without your bot answering too many out-of-scope questions**.
- **Topics that need coverage** include: greetings, bot scope, insults, compliments, criticism, and potential jokes/easter eggs.



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Handling No Match

1

Example of good steps to follow for no match

- **First try - Giving examples:** "Didn't quite catch that, my bad. I can answer questions about bot building or connect you to a live agent. What can I do for you?"
- **Second try - Ask to rephrase** "Looks like there some noise on the line, still not understanding what you mean. Mind trying one last time?"
- **Third try - Giving up and/or transferring** "Not sure we'll ever figure this out, let's bring in some reinforcements. Can I connect you to a real person?"

Task Failure

2

Example of good task failure handling

- **3 steps: Apologize/Acknowledge - Explain Reason - Provide Next Steps**
"I'm afraid there aren't any restaurant available with your search criteria. There are a couple available a few kms away, would you want me to book a table there for you?" **OR**
"Looks like I ran into an issue retrieving your client records. Please try again in a few minutes. In the meantime, do you want to explore other options?"

Misrecognition

3

Examples of good explicit and implicit confirmation messages

- **Explicit confirmation:** "Thank you for this information. Just to be sure, here is what I have so far: your name is {{workflow.name}}, you live in {{workflow.city}} and I can contact you using this email address {{workflow.email}}. Correct?"
- **Implicit confirmation:** "Sure, I can order a pizza. When would be a good time to eat tonight?"

Handling Timeouts

4

Properly handle the absence of input

- "Looks like you got busy doing something else, we can restart this conversation at another time. Just ping me when you're ready!"
- "I haven't heard from you in a while, I'll have to close this conversation. Fear not though, just shoot me a message whenever you want to talk again, I'll be here."

