

# **Team RoadToGus**

## **Final Presentation – Week 8**

**AI Expenditure Planning Assistant  
(Built in IBM Watsonx Prompt Lab)**

# Who We Are

**Jonathon —**  
Research &  
Ideation

**Wayne Lumpkin  
Jr. — Lead  
Designer &  
Prompt Engineer**

**Ryan Gilligan  
—  
Documentation  
& Insights**

**Aidan Keena —  
Technical  
Reviewer**

**Samalie  
Nakawuki —  
Scenario Writing  
& Testing**

# User Research Plan

## Slide

# WEEK 1:

# Understanding

# the Problem

### Team RoadToGus – Research Plan

#### Research Plan Purpose (Business Purpose)

To design, build, and evaluate an AI-powered financial literacy assistant that helps new and younger bank users analyze spending habits, plan savings goals, and make informed financial decisions through Watsonx.ai tools.

#### Research Objectives

Objective	Research Method(s)
1. <b>Identify financial literacy challenges</b> among younger users and understand how they manage daily/weekly expenses.	Online surveys, interviews, and analysis of existing financial literacy reports.
2. <b>Test the effectiveness</b> of AI-generated spending insights for improving financial awareness.	Prototype testing and user feedback sessions using Watsonx.ai.
3. <b>Evaluate usability</b> and accessibility of the AI assistant interface.	Usability testing, heuristic evaluation, and observation.
4. <b>Assess impact</b> of personalized financial tips on budgeting and savings behavior.	A/B testing, pre- and post-engagement data comparison.
5. <b>Measure overall satisfaction</b> and engagement with the AI tool.	Post-test surveys, follow-up questionnaires.

#### Screening Criteria

- **Geography:** U.S.-based participants (focus on East Coast for timezone alignment).
- **Market:** New and younger banking customers (ages 18–35).
- **Experience:** Limited financial planning knowledge or interest in improving budgeting.

#### Timeline

Phase	Work to be Done	Dates	Team Members
<b>Phase 1</b>	Research setup: Identify user segments, collect data sources, design surveys.	Oct 11–Oct 18	Wayne (Advisor/Strategy), Jonathon (Architect)
<b>Phase 2</b>	Prototype testing using Watsonx.ai and Watson Assistant; gather feedback.	Oct 19–Oct 26	Jonathon, Ryan
<b>Phase 3</b>	Analyze results, refine AI model, finalize documentation and demo video.	Oct 27–Nov 3	Wayne, Aidan, Sam

#### Deliverables

- Financial literacy user research summary.
- Prototype test report (Watsonx.ai integration findings).
- Final 2-minute demo video contrasting manual vs. AI-powered financial planning.
- GitHub/Google Doc with process documentation.

#### User Description

Young adults or new banking customers aged 18–35 who seek to improve financial literacy, manage spending, and plan long-term savings.

#### Number of Users per Group

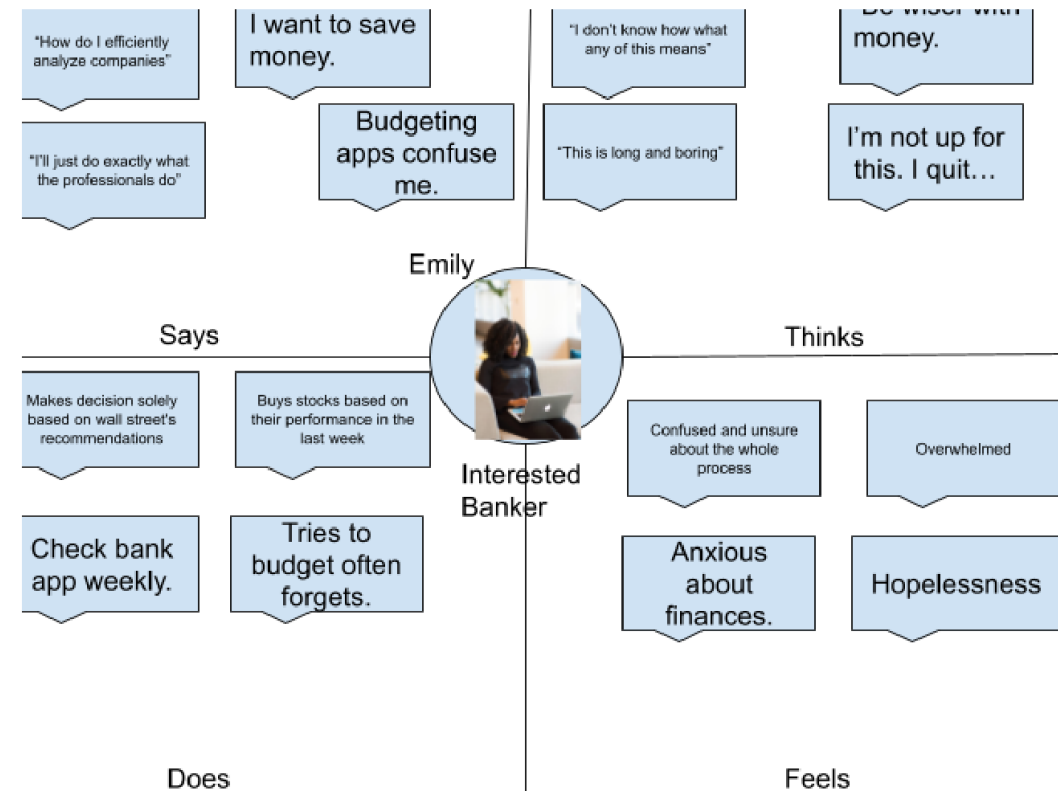
6–8 participants (divided evenly between survey and prototype test groups).

#### Additional Criteria

Participants must use mobile or online banking regularly and be open to AI-driven financial tools.

# Empathy Map Slide

🌱 Empathy Map: Financial Literacy & AI Banking Users



# As-Is Scenario Slide

## ⚙️ As-Is Scenario Map – Current User Experience

### 👤 User Persona:

**Jordan**, 29-year-old professional seeking to save more, track spending better, and feel in control of their finances — but current tools feel confusing, impersonal, and time-consuming.

### 💙 Phase 1 – Checking Finances

💬 **What Happens:** Jordan logs into their banking app mainly to check their balance and skim recent transactions.

💬 **What They Think:** *"I hope I didn't overspend again."*

⚠️ **What They Feel:** Nervous and uncertain about where their money is really going.

### 💎 Phase 2 – Tracking Expenses

💬 **What Happens:** Attempts to record spending in spreadsheets or budgeting apps but quits halfway.

💬 **What They Think:** *"This takes too long... I'll do it later."*

⚠️ **What They Feel:** Frustrated, unmotivated, and disconnected from their goals.

### 🟪 Phase 3 – Planning Savings

💬 **What Happens:** Tries new budgeting or investment apps, exploring advanced features.

💬 **What They Think:** *"Is this actually helping me, or just showing numbers?"*

⚠️ **What They Feel:** Curious but skeptical — the complexity kills the momentum.

### 🏆 Phase 4 – Reflecting on Habits

💬 **What Happens:** At month's end, Jordan reviews bills and statements, realizing repeated overspending.

💬 **What They Think:** *"I need to make a real change."*

⚠️ **What They Feel:** Disappointed but determined — ready to improve but unsure how.

## ✨ Key Insights & Opportunities





- Users crave **simplicity and clarity** — not more data overload.
- They want **guidance and encouragement**, not judgment.
- A **trustworthy AI assistant** can simplify complex financial concepts and translate numbers into achievable actions.
- **Personalized feedback loops** can turn anxiety into motivation.

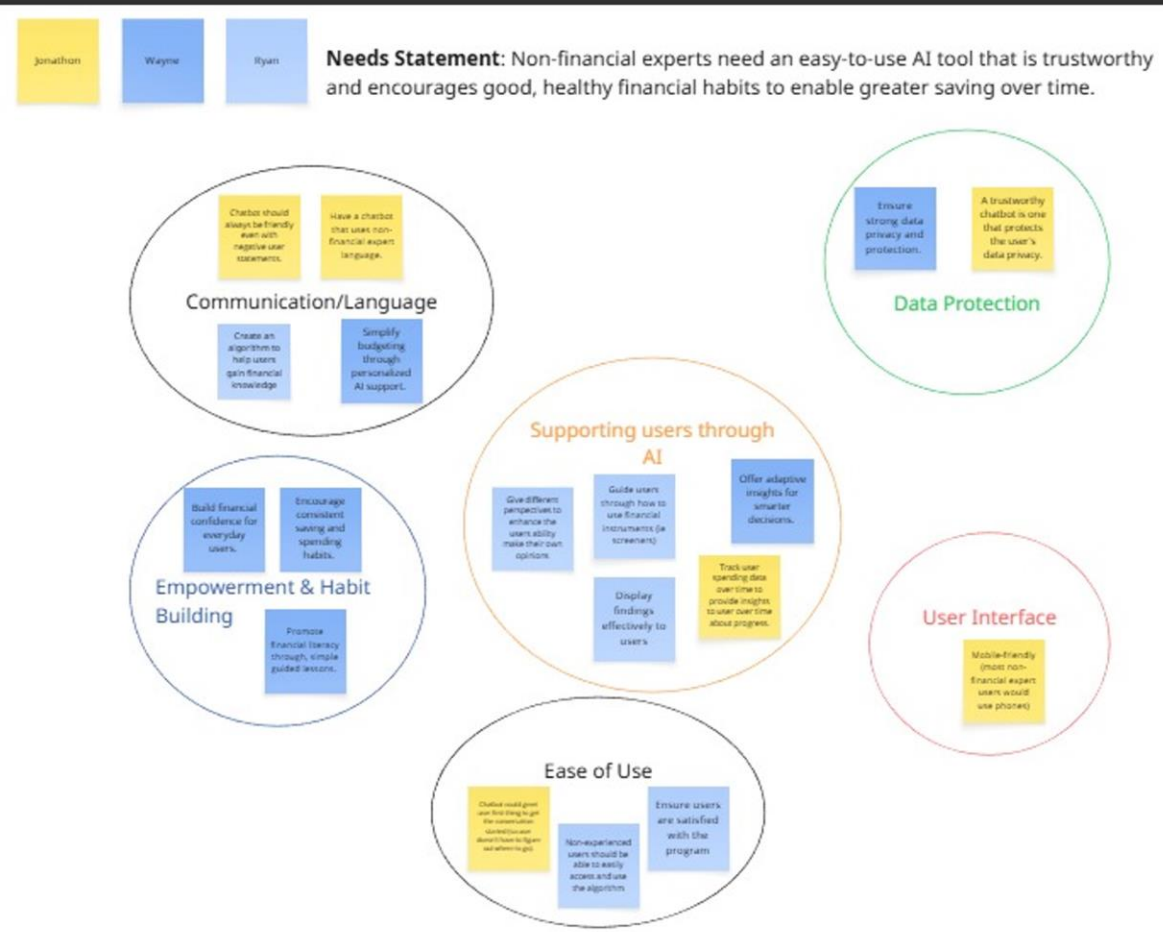
# WEEK 2: Ideation & Alignment

## The Team Alignment Map

Mission: To design and build a functional AI agent with a user-friendly design for non-experts in finance that encourages healthy financial habits and preserves data privacy for any data analysis executed on behalf of the user.

Period: Sep 2025 - Nov 2025 Cohort

<div>Joint Objectives</div> <div>What do we intend to achieve together?</div> <div></div>	<div>Joint Commitments</div> <div>Who does what and with whom?</div> <div></div>	<div>Joint Resources</div> <div>What resources do we need?</div> <div></div>	<div>Joint Risks</div> <div>What can prevent us from succeeding?</div> <div></div>
<div>1. Deliver a working prototype of an AI-powered tool</div> <div>- Provide insights on daily/weekly spending habits.</div> <div>- Connect short-term habits to long-term financial goals.</div> <div>2. Demonstrate financial literacy impact with AI</div> <div>- Encourage savings and budgeting habits.</div> <div>- Show benefits for new and younger bank users.</div> <div>3. Create a 2-minute demo video</div> <div>- Highlight smarter decision-making with AI.</div> <div>4. Submit comprehensive documentation</div> <div>- Explain process, design choices, and workflow.</div> <div>- Share via GitHub/Google Doc for transparency.</div> <div>- Contrast manual "before" vs. AI-powered "after."</div>	<div>Jonathon (Joint Team Lead – Architect)</div> <div>- Build and test prototype using Watsonx.ai, Watson Assistant, Watsonx.data.</div> <div>- Ensure integration of all tools and deliver a working demo.</div> <div>Wayne (Joint Team Lead – Strategy/Advisor)</div> <div>- Define the project vision and maintain alignment with IBM goals.</div> <div>- Review documentation, refine objectives, and ensure clarity.</div> <div>Ryan (Data Analyst / System Integrator)</div> <div>- Work with Jonathon on testing and system integration.</div> <div>- Analyze data output accuracy and financial literacy metrics.</div> <div>- Provide weekly reports on system reliability and user data flow.</div> <div>Samalie (Communications &amp; Documentation Specialist)</div> <div>- Assist Jonathon in preparing final presentation visuals and documentation.</div> <div>- Coordinate communications across team members to ensure task completion.</div> <div>- Edit, proofread, and format all deliverables to ensure submission readiness.</div> <div>Aidan (Research &amp; Insights Partner)</div> <div>- Work with Wayne to analyze user needs and behavioral insights.</div> <div>- Conduct competitor and market research for benchmarking.</div> <div>- Draft content for final presentation slides and executive summary.</div> <div>Team RoadToGus (Shared)</div> <div>- Participate in weekly syncs to report progress.</div> <div>- Divide responsibilities (research, testing, documentation, data gathering, etc.).</div> <div>- Collaborate on the final demo video and deliverables.</div>	<div>Technology:</div> <div>- WatsonX.ai for spending insights</div> <div>- WatsonX Assistant for financial education</div> <div>- WatsonX.data for transaction analysis</div> <div>- Github repo for version control, storing code, and documentation</div> <div>- Video-recording software (e.g., Zoom)</div> <div>- Team communication software (Zoom)</div> <div>Data:</div> <div>- At least 5-10 financial literacy reports</div> <div>- Data privacy standard documentation</div> <div>- Budgeting tool case studies documentation</div> <div>- (Potentially) some example chat prompt/response flows</div> <div>Support:</div> <div>- IBM mentors to handle both general &amp; technical questions/issues via email, Zoom chat, and weekly meetings</div> <div>- IBM SkillsBuild tutorials and module documentation</div>	<div>Technical:</div> <div>- Data extraction errors - WatsonX may struggle with varied data inputs as a whole (structured/unstructured)</div> <div>- Tool limitations - WatsonX may still be limited in what it can provide based on its baseline dataset and whatever data is fed to it to fine-tune it for this use case</div> <div>Workflow Process:</div> <div>- Team misalignment - With different parts of the project assigned to different people, there will likely be workflows that do not match as required during the building process</div> <div>- Time mismanagement - Delaying work too long or assigning too little time to parts of the AI-building process may cause even further delay (also applies to writing up documentation and the demo video)</div> <div>Budgetary:</div> <div>- IBM credit depletion - Project team could potentially deplete pre-allocated IBM Cloud credits (\$250) if usage is not monitored appropriately or if sessions aren't closed out properly after completing work (refer to Banking-AI Lab-Problem-Statement-guide.docx for specifics)</div>



# Needs Statement

# WEEK 3: Building Smarter Solutions

## Team RoadToGus – IBM Design Thinking Deliverable

This *To-Be Scenario Map* captures the future vision of how our AI Financial Assistant transforms the user's experience from confusion to clarity, and from stress to empowerment.

## To-Be Scenario Map – Future User Experience

### User Persona:

**Jordan** – a 29-year-old professional who now uses the **AI Financial Assistant** to stay consistent, save easily, and feel confident managing money.

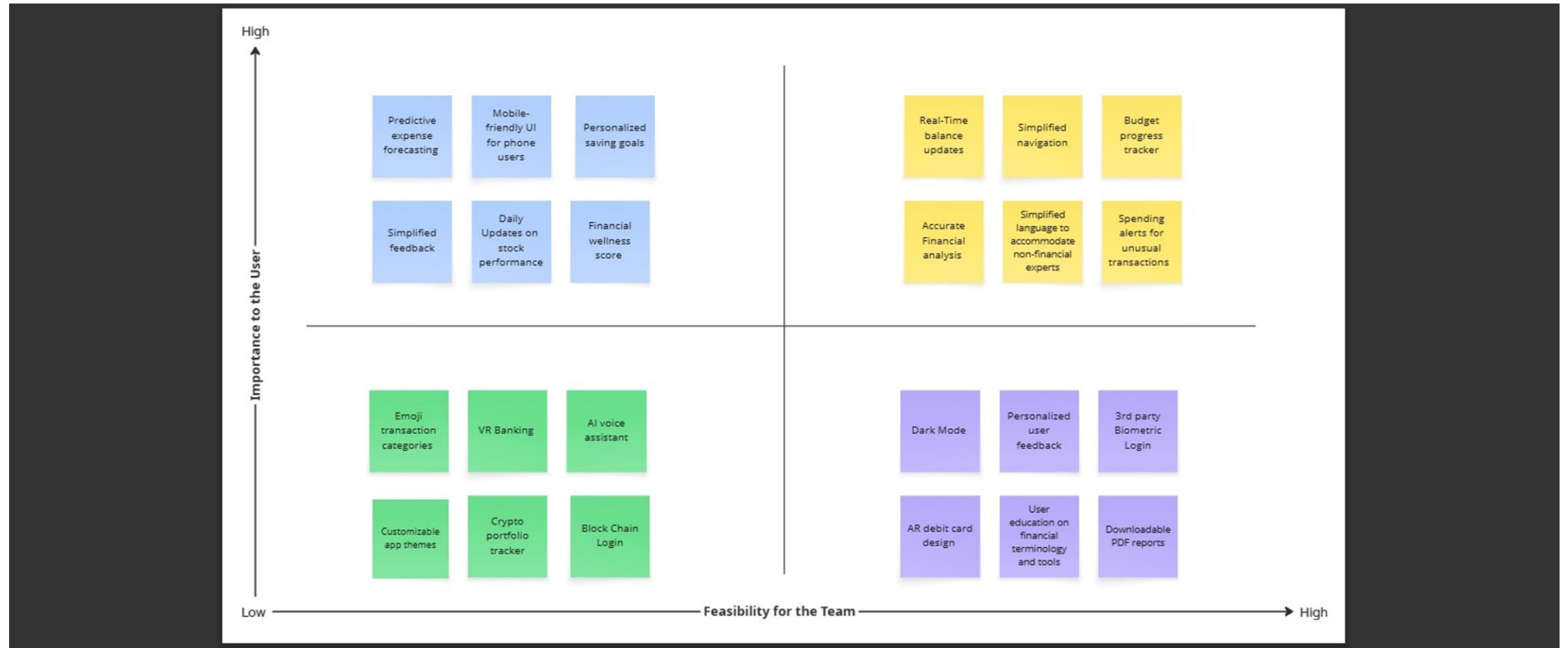
Phases	Doing	Thinking	Feeling
1. <b>Getting Started</b>	Opens AI app, connects bank accounts, and sets a saving goal.	"This setup was fast — finally something simple."	Excited and curious.
2. <b>Daily Tracking</b>	Receives automatic insights and daily summaries.	"It shows exactly where my money goes."	Relieved and motivated.
3. <b>Smart Guidance</b>	Gets weekly AI tips and visual goal tracking.	"I'm learning how to save smarter."	Confident and supported.
4. <b>Building Habits</b>	Follows personalized budgeting plan and earns progress rewards.	"This feels achievable — I'm improving."	Empowered and proud.
5. <b>Reflecting and Growing</b>	Reviews charts, celebrates savings milestones, and sets new goals.	"I've finally got control of my finances."	Accomplished and optimistic.

### Key Improvements from the As-Is Scenario

- The AI removes complexity by automating tracking and analysis.
- Personalized insights replace frustration with empowerment.
- Emotional state shifts from **anxiety** → **confidence**.
- The user develops lasting motivation and a sense of ownership over their finances.



# Prioritization Grid



# Priority Features

## Introduction

The following section highlights Team RoadToGus's top-priority features and initial prototype concepts derived from our completed Prioritization Grid. These outcomes represent high-impact, high-feasibility ideas that align with our users' needs and our team's capabilities within IBM's Enterprise Design Thinking framework.

## 🔗 Step 1: Featured List (Summarize Top Features)

These come from your upper-right quadrant (yellow – High Importance / High feasibility) — the “No-Brainers.”  
They're the backbone of your MVP (Minimum Viable Product).

### 🟡 Team RoadToGus – Featured List

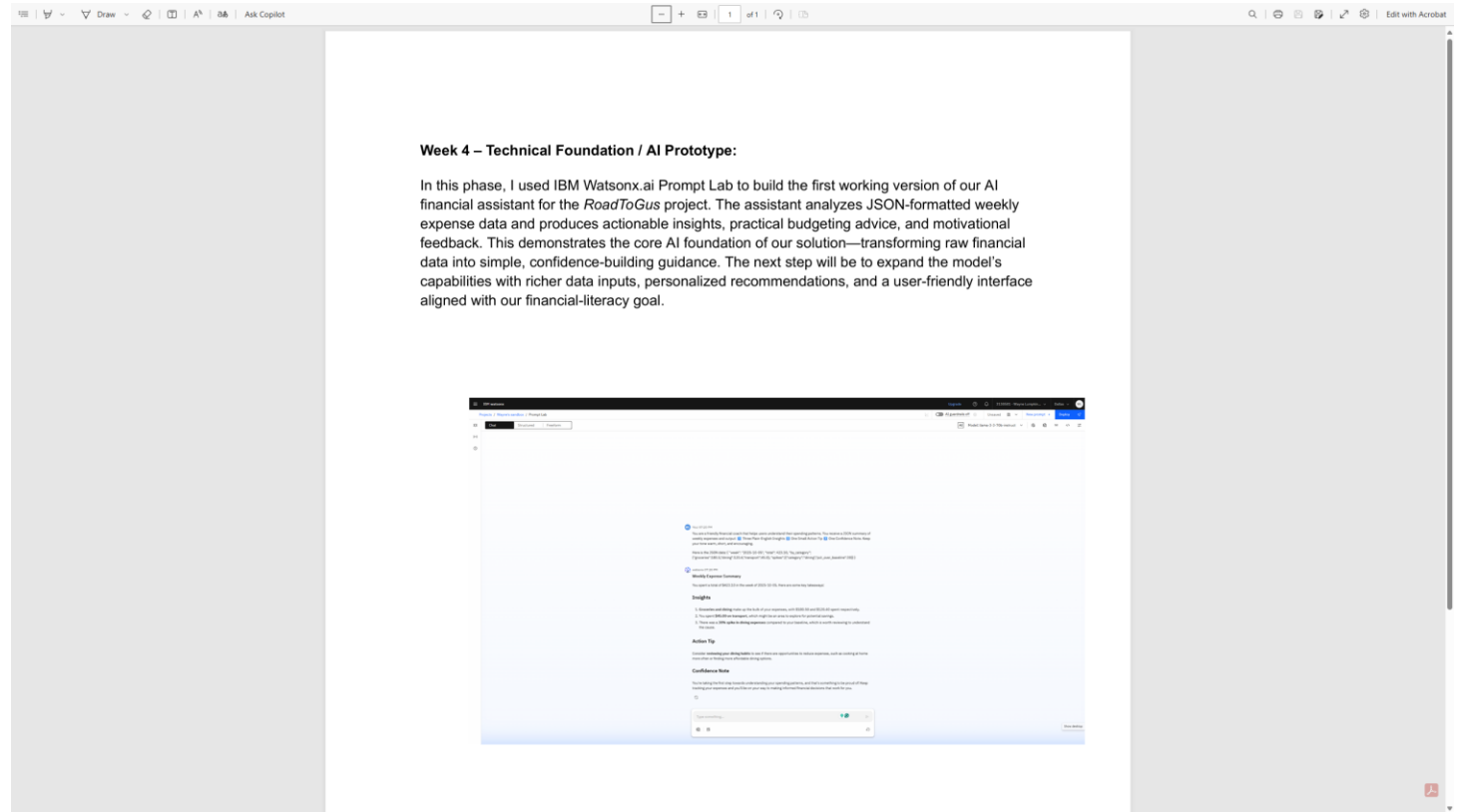
Feature	User Value	Why It Matters
Real-Time Balance Updates	High	Gives users immediate awareness of spending and available funds.
Simplified Navigation	High	Enhances usability for all users, reducing frustration.
Budget Progress Tracker	High	Encourages consistent saving and visual goal tracking.
Accurate Financial Analysis	High	Empowers users to understand their financial habits clearly.
Simplified Language for Non-Financial Users	High	Makes banking inclusive and user-friendly.
Spending Alerts for Unusual Transactions	High	Builds trust and enhances financial security.

# Utility Matrix

## Team RoadToGus – Feature Utility Matrix

Feature	Personal User	Corporate User	Business User	Platform Integration
Real-Time Balance Updates	✓	✓	✓	✓
Simplified Navigation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Budget Progress Tracker	✓	✓	✗	✓
Accurate Financial Analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓
Simplified Language for Non-Financial Users	✓	✗	✓	✓
Spending Alerts (Overdraft / Overspending Warnings)	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Week 4 Deliverable – Watsonx Prompt



# WEEKS 5– 7: Prototype Showcase

## Step 2: Mock-Up Prototype (Visual Blueprint)

Next, you'll **visualize** how those six top features would appear in the app.

### Suggested Mock-Up Layout (4 Key Screens)

#### 1. Home Dashboard

- Real-time balance displayed
- Quick “Budget Progress Tracker” bar
- Spending alert notifications

#### 2. Spending Summary Page

- Pie or bar graph for expense categories
- “Accurate Financial Analysis” data visualization

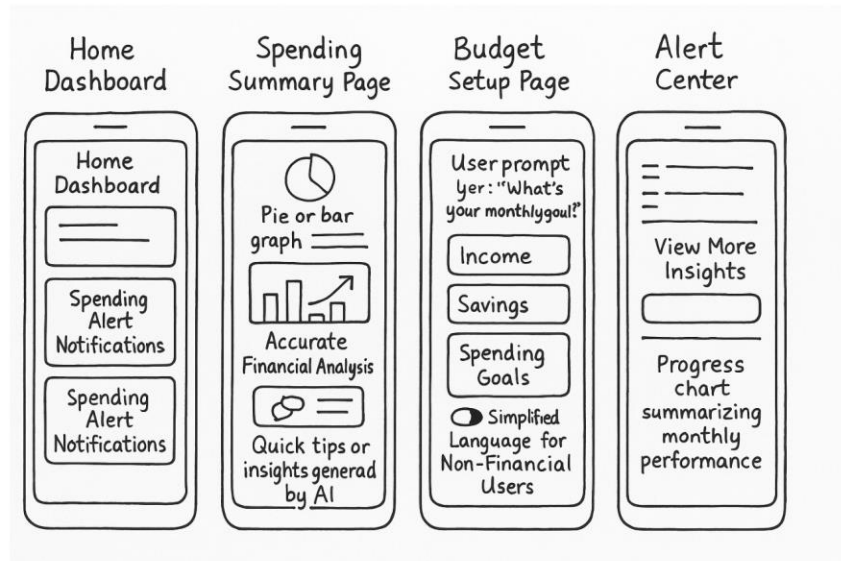
#### 3. Budget Setup Page

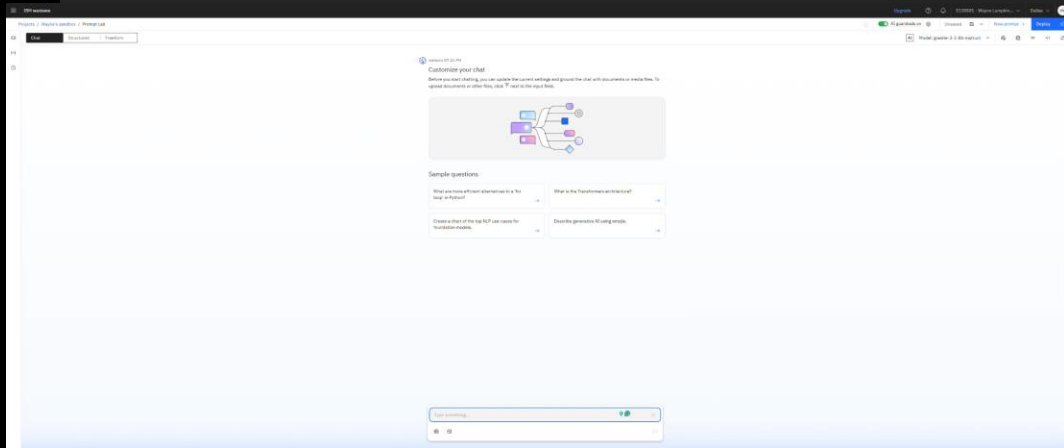
- Simple language prompts (“What’s your monthly goal?”)
- “Simplified Language for Non-Financial Users” in action

#### 4. Alert Center

- List of spending notifications
- “View More Insights” button

# Visual Wireframe





# WEEK 8: Final Demo

You: 05:06 PM

I need to cut down on unnecessary expenses so I can save more. Based on my monthly budget (in \$), can you suggest anywhere where I can trim down expenses?

watsonx 05:06 PM

Based on the provided budget categories, there are several areas where you could potentially reduce expenses more:

1. Alcohol & Bars: \$50 - You could consider cutting back on alcohol consumption or limiting visits to bars.

2. Coffee Shops: \$15 - Switching to home-brewed coffee or limiting your visits to coffee shops could save you money.

3. Entertainment: \$25 - Look for free or low-cost entertainment options, such as parks, libraries, or community events.

4. Fast Food: \$15 - Cooking at home more often can save money and potentially improve your diet.

5. Groceries: \$150 - Meal planning, reducing food waste, and buying in bulk or sales can help lower grocery expenses.

6. Restaurants: \$150 - Eating out less frequently would significantly cut this category.

7. Shopping: \$100 - Avoid impulse purchases, compare prices, and look for deals before buying.

8. Mobile Phone: \$65 - Evaluate your current plan and consider switching to a more affordable one or using a prepaid plan.

These categories show the highest discretionary spending. Prioritize the areas that would be easiest for you to cut back on, keeping in mind your personal preferences and lifestyle. Remember, the goal is to find a balance between saving money and maintaining a satisfying quality of life.

Monthly Budget

x

Type something...

Projects / AI Experiential Learning Labs Sandbox / Budget.txt

Preview asset

Visualization

Feature group  $\beta$

Preview: Text

Category,Budget

Alcohol & Bars,50

Auto Insurance,75

Coffee Shops,15

Electronics & Software,0

Entertainment,25

Fast Food,15

Gas & Fuel,75

Groceries,150

Haircut,30

Home Improvement,250

Internet,75

Mobile Phone,65

Mortgage & Rent,1100

Movies & DVDs,0

Music,11

Restaurants,150

Shopping,100

Television,15

Utilities,150

# Prompting The Bot



# Prompting the Bot Continued

33 You: 05:01 PM

Based on my transactional data, can you give me any recommendations on how to better budget and lower my expenses? I want to save more, so I need to cut down on unnecessary spending.

WatsonX 05:01 PM

Based on the provided transaction data, here are some recommendations to help you better budget and lower your expenses:

- Categorize and Analyze Spending:** Your transactions are already categorized, which is a great starting point. Analyze the categories where you spend the most. In your case, Health & Fitness, Travel, Salary, and Rent appear to be significant expense categories.
- Identify Recurring Expenses:** Look for recurring expenses that might be subscription-based or regular bills. In your data, Rent, Salary, and Health & Fitness show consistent monthly payments. Consider if there are ways to reduce these, such as negotiating rent, finding cheaper health insurance, or exploring alternative transportation options to reduce commuting costs.
- Single Large Purchases:** Occasionally, there are large one-time expenses (e.g., \$4009.0 for 'Other' on 2020-02-15, \$4596.0 for 'Other' on 2021-12-28). While some of these might be unavoidable, try to minimize such large, infrequent expenses by planning ahead or finding more economical alternatives.
- Food & Drink:** This category appears to be a significant expense. Try meal planning, cooking at home more often, and limiting dining out or takeout.
- Entertainment:** Entertainment expenses can add up. Consider free or low-cost alternatives, such as parks, local events, or borrowing books/movies from the library.
- Shopping:** There are several shopping-related expenses. Try to limit impulse buys, make a shopping list, and wait before making non-essential purchases to avoid unnecessary spending.
- Travel:** Travel expenses are another notable category. If possible, plan trips in advance to take advantage of early bird discounts or off-peak travel times.
- Income Categories:** You have income from Investment, Salary, and Other sources. Ensure you're maximizing these income streams. For instance, consider increasing contributions to investment accounts or exploring additional income opportunities.
- Use Budgeting Tools:** Implement a budgeting app or spreadsheet to track your income and expenses systematically. This will help you visualize your spending patterns and identify areas for improvement.
- Set Financial Goals:** Establish clear, measurable financial goals (e.g., saving a certain amount each month) and adjust your spending habits accordingly.

By implementing these recommendations and regularly reviewing your spending habits, you should be able to lower your expenses and increase your savings.



Personal Finance Transactional Data Example x

Type something...



Projects / AI Experiential Learning Labs Sandbox / Personal\_Finance\_Dataset.txt

Preview asset

Visualization

Feature group β

Preview: Text

```
Date,Transaction Description,Category,Amount,Type
2020-01-02,Score each.,Food & Drink,1485.69,Expense
2020-01-02,Quality throughout.,Utilities,1475.58,Expense
2020-01-04,Instead ahead despite measure ago.,Rent,1185.08,Expense
2020-01-05,Information last everything thank serve.,Investment,2291.0,Income
2020-01-13,Future choice whatever from.,Food & Drink,1126.88,Expense
2020-01-14,Benefit suggest page southern.,Shopping,448.68,Expense
2020-01-18,By two bad fall pick.,Food & Drink,1520.03,Expense
2020-01-19,Court attorney product significant world.,Other,3287.0,Income
2020-01-21,Herself law.,Entertainment,1914.85,Expense
2020-01-25,Have decide environment.,Rent,766.06,Expense
2020-01-25,Play move each left establish.,Health & Fitness,1211.41,Expense
2020-01-26,Range successful simply.,Salary,1077.09,Expense
2020-01-29,Source husband.,Shopping,166.81,Expense
2020-01-30,Tree note responsibility.,Health & Fitness,1158.93,Expense
2020-01-31,How trip learn enter.,Food & Drink,1325.91,Expense
2020-01-31,Much section investment on gun.,Rent,1712.08,Expense
2020-01-31,Management sense technology check civil.,Shopping,563.17,Expense
2020-02-02,As high you more wife.,Health & Fitness,333.68,Expense
2020-02-04,Race mr.,Travel,1406.62,Expense
2020-02-05,Born itself law west.,Rent,1222.17,Expense
2020-02-05,Seven medical blood personal.,Investment,1838.0,Income
2020-02-07,Current hear claim well two.,Travel,1979.15,Expense
2020-02-07,Food affect upon these story.,Entertainment,1372.38,Expense
2020-02-08,Bank there water.,Food & Drink,465.81,Expense
2020-02-08,Staff within mouth call.,Other,3786.0,Income
2020-02-09,Close month parent who up.,Entertainment,1827.14,Expense
2020-02-11,Human public health.,Health & Fitness,433.13,Expense
2020-02-13,Building different full open.,Salary,294.31,Expense
2020-02-13,Detail audience piece director town.,Other,4009.0,Income
2020-02-16,Method everything.,Shopping,730.37,Expense
2020-02-16,Much rich think.,Utilities,1023.96,Expense
2020-02-18,Drug list imagine behind.,Investment,1398.0,Income
2020-02-19,Interest level rock pull.,Investment,3958.0,Income
2020-02-20,I fund.,Shopping,769.42,Expense
2020-02-26,Court movie cell.,Travel,1942.45,Expense
2020-02-27,Leg themselves away.,Food & Drink,1363.76,Expense
2020-02-28,Anything yourself.,Other,3286.0,Income
2020-02-28,Unit support.,Other,1795.0,Income
2020-02-29,Magazine degree husband around.,Travel,1944.06,Expense
2020-03-03,World enter.,Rent,1742.33,Expense
2020-03-04,Institution whatever yet.,Entertainment,314.15,Expense
2020-03-04,Choice father why often.,Food & Drink,1201.9,Expense
2020-03-09,Security arm.,Rent,1858.91,Expense
2020-03-09,Me system church whether.,Travel,486.51,Expense
2020-03-11,Attention attack technology.,Rent,180.45,Expense
2020-03-12,Walk now often.,Rent,1956.19,Expense
2020-03-12,Bank price north first end.,Utilities,265.5,Expense
2020-03-12,Enter capital population.,Utilities,537.46,Expense
2020-03-14,Upon very act perform.,Shopping,1929.08,Expense
2020-03-15,Available defense.,Entertainment,1428.77,Expense
2020-03-18,Value thing these.,Health & Fitness,881.82,Expense
2020-03-21,Citizen street region.,Rent,503.33,Expense
2020-03-23,Property never.,Investment,2385.0,Income
2020-03-23,Enough threat score.,Food & Drink,151.28,Expense
2020-03-24,Example decision garden.,Entertainment,144.13,Expense
2020-03-28,Major town suffer begin.,Other,1080.0,Income
2020-04-02,Analysis four capital.,Travel,1341.27,Expense
2020-04-05,Scientist necessary into.,Utilities,1449.47,Expense
2020-04-06,Away third.,Salary,493.56,Expense
2020-04-06,Along hard need involve among.,Shopping,388.92,Expense
2020-04-10,Together decide.,Other,3402.0,Income
2020-04-17,Government nice.,Salary,1729.04,Expense
2020-04-17,See understand door class son.,Investment,996.0,Income
2020-04-18,Agent say forward us.,Health & Fitness,1603.18,Expense
2020-04-22,City red him.,Investment,2058.0,Income
2020-04-23,Develop staff least figure.,Utilities,849.54,Expense
2020-04-25,Age cover foreign.,Entertainment,1750.23,Expense
2020-04-26,Go meeting quickly.,Investment,914.0,Income
2020-04-26,Voice boy wife condition.,Food & Drink,1938.3,Expense
2020-04-27,Board its.,Entertainment,340.96,Expense
2020-04-27,Paper memory history office.,Entertainment,1730.65,Expense
2020-04-29,Remember ability.,Utilities,764.16,Expense
2020-04-30,Hair attorney professional.,Travel,1853.77,Expense
2020-05-03,Finish summer rest feel finally.,Travel,851.78,Expense
2020-05-03,I fast camera inside.,Salary,318.05,Expense
2020-05-03,Past feeling nature.,Food & Drink,1162.57,Expense
2020-05-05,Expert involve oil.,Health & Fitness,123.76,Expense
2020-05-06,Kid put memory soldier.,Utilities,123.19,Expense
2020-05-06,Exist professional.,Utilities,146.36,Expense
2020-05-07,Stand seem.,Investment,3807.0,Income
```

# Prompting The Bot Continued

Projects / AI Experiential Learning Labs Sandbox / Prompt-Tuning (Multi-shot Prompting) IBM 8B Granite Model in Personal Financial Planning - jg

ChatStructuredFreeform

AIModel: granite-3-0b-instruct

New prompt

Hint: This model works better when you provide at least 1 example.

Set up

Instruction (optional)

Answer the provided question in a short, concise manner and a/an ([tone]) tone, but do not eliminate important content for the sake of brevity. Answer in paragraph form like the provided examples. There should be no space preceding the first word on the first line of a paragraph.

Examples (optional)

Input:	Output:
How do I make a budget?	First, sit down and track all of your income and spending over the next few months. Once you have a full picture of your budget, you can start making changes. You'll get an idea of what expenses you can cut and where you can save a little extra or pay toward any debt you have.
Should I have an emergency fund?	An emergency fund is there to help you in the event something unexpected happens. If you lose your job or get hit with a big bill, you can use your emergency fund to help get you through until things are back on track. How much should you save in an emergency fund? Some financial professionals recommend having enough in an emergency fund to cover your expenses for at least three to six months, while others say you need enough to cover expenses for up to a year. Ultimately, it is up to you and depends on what you are able to put aside after taking care of necessary expenses. Having any amount ready to help when something unexpected happens...
Should I pay down my debts or save for retirement?	The answer to this question really depends on your financial situation. Your budget can provide some insight. In general, if you can start saving for retirement with a 401(k) through your employer, it's a good idea to start building retirement savings there. Then, look at your budget and see where you can make some cuts so you can also pay down debt. You may consider working with a financial professional to create a plan for paying off debt and saving for retirement.
Does my credit score matter?	Your credit score can have a big impact on your life. A low credit score usually means you're offered less attractive terms and rates on personal loans, car loans and mortgages. The better your credit score, the more likely you are to save with more attractive rates.
How much money should you save each month?	The amount you should save each month can vary based on your income, expenses, and financial goals. A common guideline is the 50/30/20 rule, which suggests allocating 50% of your income to necessities, 30% to discretionary expenses and 20% to savings and investments.
How do I set achievable targets for growing my savings over time?	Begin by analyzing your current cash flow: subtract your fixed expenses from your take-home pay to see what's available. Break your extra cash into three buckets—savings, spending, and investing—and aim to direct at least one-fifth of each paycheck toward your future goals. Translate that into monthly or weekly goals (e.g., \$250 to savings each paycheck). As income rises or expenses change, revisit and adjust your targets to remain challenging yet realistic. Tracking progress visually—through a spreadsheet or goal-tracking app—helps you stay motivated and accountable.
What's a reliable framework for translating income and expenses into a workable budget?	Try the "50/30/20" split: half your take-home pay on essentials, 30% on discretionary treats, and 20% toward debt and savings. To implement it, tally your average monthly net pay, categorize past expenses, and adjust until each bucket fits the guideline. Customize percentages to suit your goals—like boosting savings to 25% if you're targeting aggressive debt payoff—and then automate transfers into separate accounts aligned with each category. Review monthly to fine-tune and ensure you're living within your means.

Add example

Try

Test your prompt

Input:	Output:
How can I better budget my personal finances as a college student? How can I still pay down my student debt and save while in school?	<div>Budgeting as a college student can be challenging, but it's crucial for managing your finances and planning for the future. Start by tracking your income and expenses. This will give you a clear picture of where your money is going. Look for areas where you can cut back, such as eating out or entertainment. Consider getting a part-time job or internship to supplement your income.</div> <div>When it comes to student debt, prioritize making at least the minimum payments on your loans. If possible, try to pay more than the minimum to reduce the overall interest you'll pay. Look into income-driven repayment plans, which can make your monthly payments more manageable.</div> <div>Saving while in school might seem difficult, but it's important. Start small by setting aside a portion of any extra income you have. Even a small amount can add up over time. Consider opening a high-yield savings account, which can offer better interest rates than traditional savings accounts.</div> <div>Remember, the key to successful budgeting is to make a plan and stick to it. Regularly review and adjust your budget as needed.</div>

# Next Steps

```
1  [
2  {
3    "input": "<text>",
4    "output": "<text>"
5  },
6  {
7    "input": "<text>",
8    "output": "<text>"
9  },
10 {
11  "input": "<text>",
12  "output": "<text>"
13 },
14 {
15  "input": "<text>",
16  "output": "<text>"
17 },
18 {
19  "input": "<text>",
20  "output": "<text>"
21 }
22 ]
```

```
1  [
2  {
3    "input": "How do I make a budget?",
4    "output": "First, sit down and track all of your income and spending over the next few months. Once you have a full picture of your budget, you can start making changes. You'll get an idea of what expenses you're looking at and how much you can afford to spend on each category."
5  },
6  {
7    "input": "Should I have an emergency fund?",
8    "output": "An emergency fund is there to help you in the event something unexpected happens. If you lose your job or get hit with a big bill, you can use your emergency fund to help get you through until you can get back on your feet."
9  },
10 {
11  "input": "Should I pay down my debts or save for retirement?",
12  "output": "The answer to this question really depends on your financial situation. Your budget can provide some insight. In general, if you can start saving for retirement with a 401(k) through your employer, that's a good idea."
13 },
14 {
15  "input": "How much should I save each month for retirement?",
16  "output": "Here's another question where a financial professional can help you make a plan that aligns with your budget. Generally speaking, you want to look at your current budget, when you plan to retire, and how much you need to live on in retirement."
17 },
18 {
19  "input": "How do I save for my children's education?",
20  "output": "There's no doubt education is expensive – that's why many parents start planning to save for college costs early. It's something else you can make space for in your budget. One popular option is to open a 529 plan."
21 },
22 {
23  "input": "Do I need insurance?",
24  "output": "Life insurance is one of the best ways to help protect your family after you pass. It also helps guard against the unexpected. With big life events, such as getting married or having kids, it's a good idea to look into life insurance."
25 },
26 {
27  "input": "Does my credit score matter?",
28  "output": "Your credit score can have a big impact on your life. A low credit score usually means you're offered less attractive terms and rates on personal loans, car loans and mortgages. The better your credit score, the more options you have."
29 },
30 {
31  "input": "What Is personal finance?",
32  "output": "Personal finance is about meeting your financial goals and understanding all the routes to do this, from saving and investing, and keeping debt under control, to buying a home to planning for retirement."
33 },
34 {
35  "input": "Why is personal finance important?",
36  "output": "Not getting control of your personal finances can leave you unprotected when a crisis comes along, whether it's an illness, an unexpected job loss, or the death of the family breadwinner. The better you understand your finances, the more prepared you'll be."
37 },
38 {
39  "input": "Should I be managing my finances differently since COVID-19?",
40  "output": "What the pandemic showed is that people are a lot more secure if they have an emergency fund, have learned to budget and have created a financial plan. One with a Plan B and Plan C. Those who didn't have a plan were in a lot of trouble."
41 },
42 {
43  "input": "How much liability insurance do I need for my car?",
44  "output": "For starters, you need to buy at least the minimum amount for your state. The two types of liability coverage for an auto accident are bodily injury liability (for injury to other people) and property damage liability (for damage to other people's property)."
45 },
46 ]
```

Due to limits in our IBM subscription,  
we were unable to fine-tune the model



## Upgrade required

To tune and deploy a LoRA or QLoRA adapter with IBM watsonx.ai Runtime, ask your IBM Cloud account administrator to upgrade your watsonx.ai Runtime service "watsonx Challenge WML" to the standard plan.