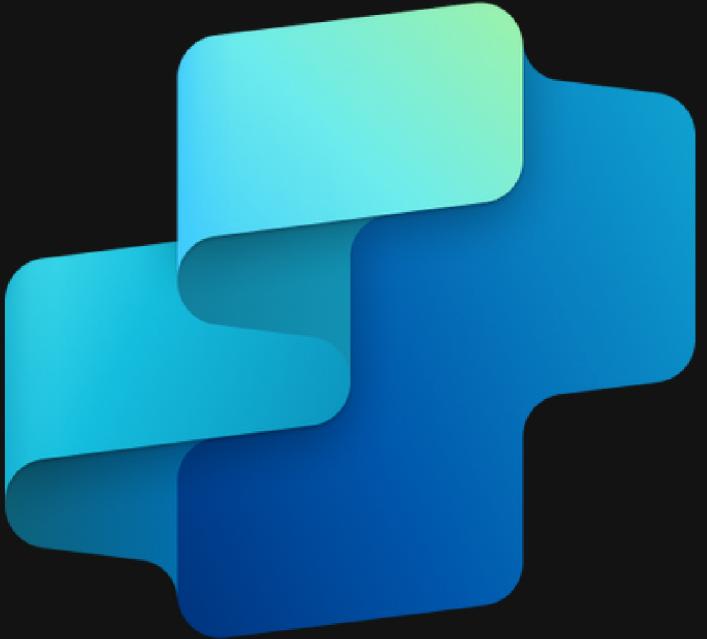


- 04 -

## Designing Custom Topics from the Scratch



MONTHLY MASTERY

# FEATURE-A-DAY

with Copilot Studio



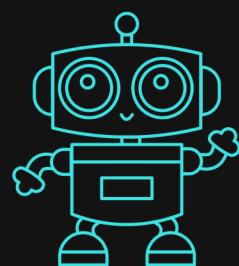
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# Topic Creation Methods

There are two ways to create a topic in Copilot Studio:  
from **blank** or from a **description**.

Creating **from blank** is like painting on a blank canvas – you have complete freedom to design the conversation flow.



On the other hand, creating **from description** is like coloring within the lines – it gives a basic outline based on your input.

Today, we'll focus on the **from blank** method,  
where your creativity can truly shine.



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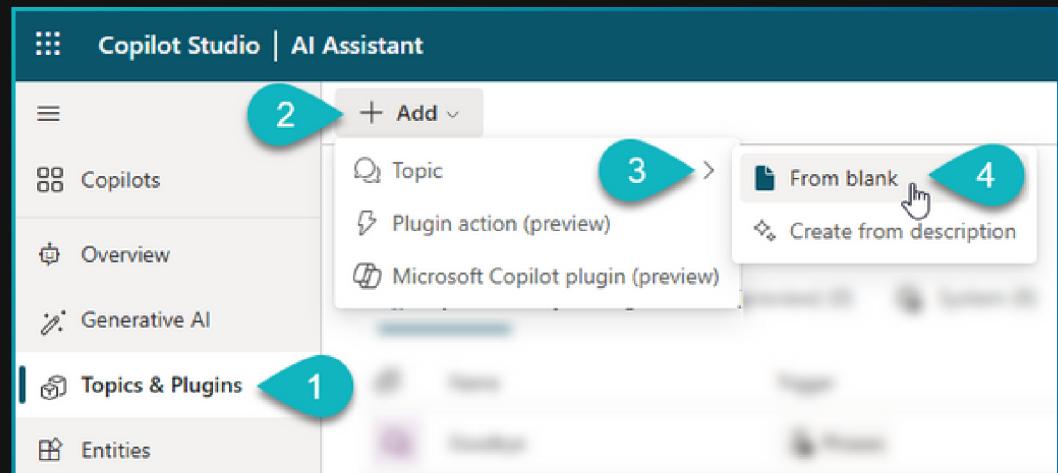
# Create a Topic from blank

## Step 1 - create

If you're familiar with [Power Virtual Agents](#), you'll find the process of creating a topic from blank quite similar.

We're going to craft a topic using the web app of Copilot Studio:

1. Navigate to <https://web.powerva.microsoft.com/>
2. Select your copilot (I'm using [AI Assistant](#) copilot)
3. Navigate to [Topics & Plugins](#) section
4. Select [+Add](#) -> [Topic](#) -> [From blank](#)



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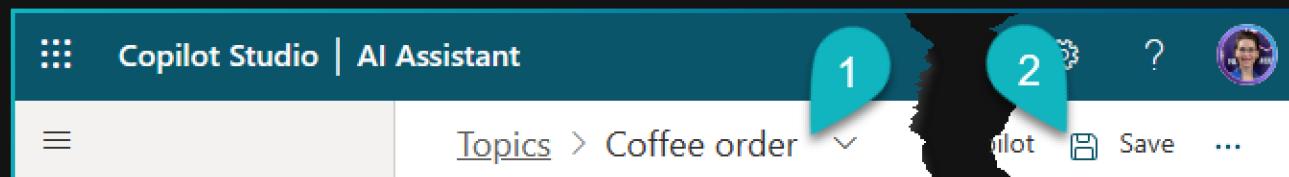
# Create a Topic from blank

## Step 2 - name

Now that you've landed on the topic canvas, it's time for a little naming ceremony!



1. Head to the top left corner where "Untitled" is eagerly awaiting its new identity
2. Click there and christen your topic with a name that suits its purpose – for our example, let's go with **Coffee Order**
3. Just a friendly reminder: don't forget to hit the **Save** button. It's like saying, "Yes, I do!" to your topic's name. This small step avoids any 'nameless' mix-ups in your future topic adventures.



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# Create a Topic from blank

## Step 3 - trigger

With our topic proudly bearing the title [Coffee Order](#), it's time to set up its trigger, the magic word that gets things rolling.

1. Click on the [Phrases](#) section in the right panel
2. Here, in the [Add phrases](#) box, type your chosen trigger phrase – for us, it's simply [coffee](#)
3. Hit [+](#) button (or Shift+Enter) to lock it in.

Remember, this is how you say, "You're it!" to your trigger phrase.

The screenshot shows two overlapping windows. The top window is titled 'On Recognized Intent properties' and describes it as triggered when an intent is recognized. It has a 'Phrases' section with a note that phrases teach the copilot different ways someone might ask about the topic. A blue callout bubble labeled '1' points to the 'Phrases' link. The bottom window is titled 'On Recognized Intent' and has a 'Phrases' section with instructions to start learning by adding 5-10 trigger phrases. It includes a 'Show writing tips' link, an 'Add phrases' section with a note about natural language understanding, and a text input field containing 'coffee'. A blue callout bubble labeled '2' points to the input field, and another labeled '3' points to the '+' button. Both windows have a 'Builder' tab at the bottom right.



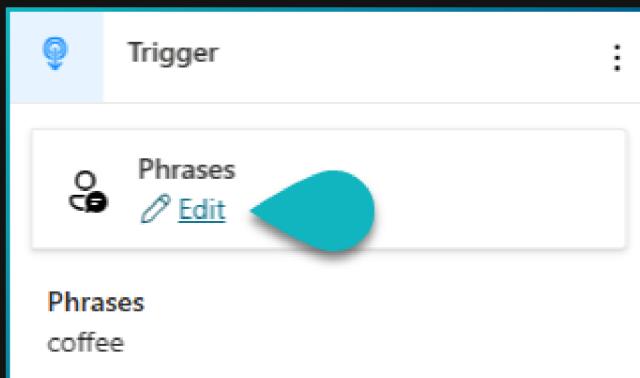
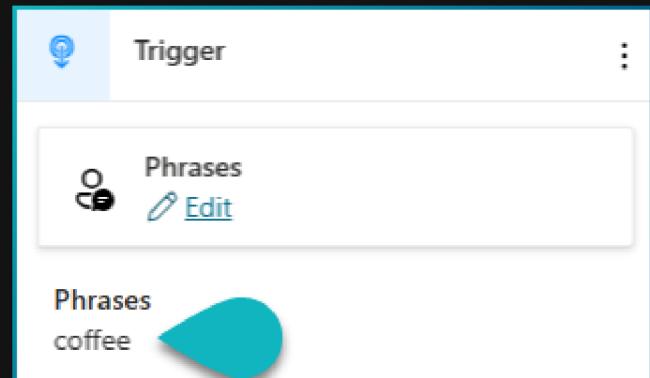
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# Create a Topic from blank

## Step 3 - trigger

Watch as your phrase takes its place on the trigger node, ready to spring into action!



If you need to add more trigger phrases and the right pane has closed, simply click **Edit** on the Trigger node. This will reopen the **Phrases** pane, allowing you to continue adding your triggers.



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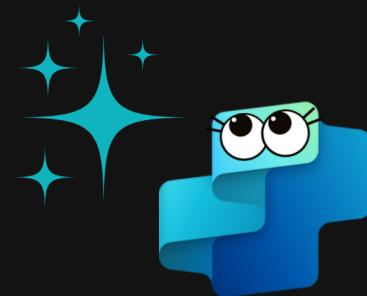


# Create a Topic from blank

## Step 3 - trigger

A few tips to make your triggers sparkle:

- Think **short and sweet**: Aim for 5-15 words per phrase.
- Tackle **one idea at a time**, using different words for flair.
- Mix it up with **various nouns, verbs, and adjectives**.
- Forget about grammar school rules here – no stress on **capitals, plurals, or perfect spelling**.
- Keep your triggers **for kicking off chats**, not for mid-conversation detours.
- To get your Copilot learning on its feet, start with **5-10 trigger phrases**.



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# Create a Topic from blank

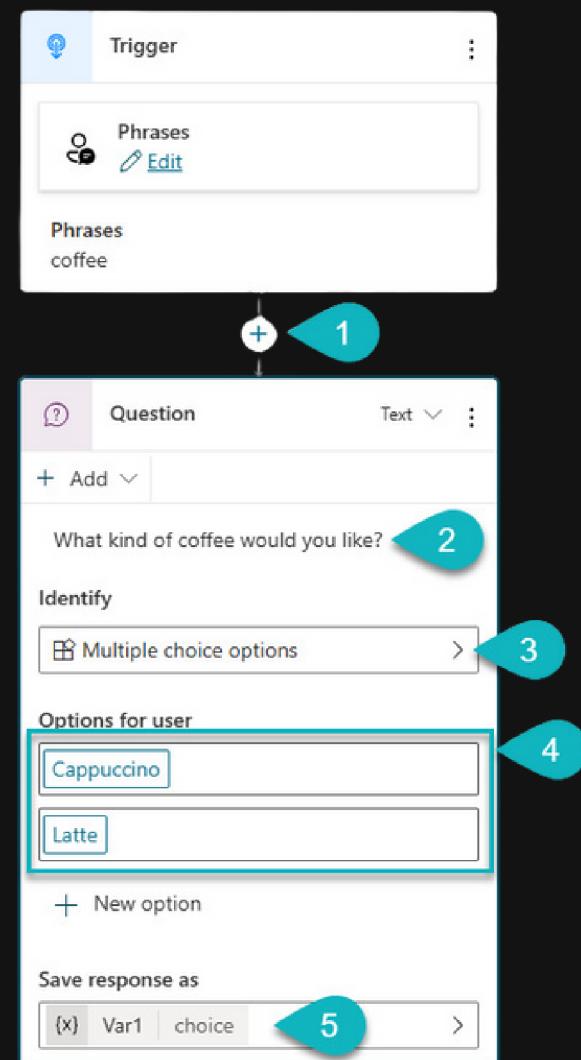
## Step 4 - actions

We're almost there with our first custom topic! Let's bring it to life with a few actions:

1. Click the + icon below the trigger node and add an **Ask a question** node.
2. Enter the question

**What kind of coffee would you like?**  
in the **Ask a message** box

3. For response options, select **Multiple choice** under **Identify**
4. Add two choices for the user by clicking + **New option** under **Options for user**: **Cappuccino** and **Latte**



Have a look, the user's choice gets stored in **Var1**. We'll explore variables more in a future series!



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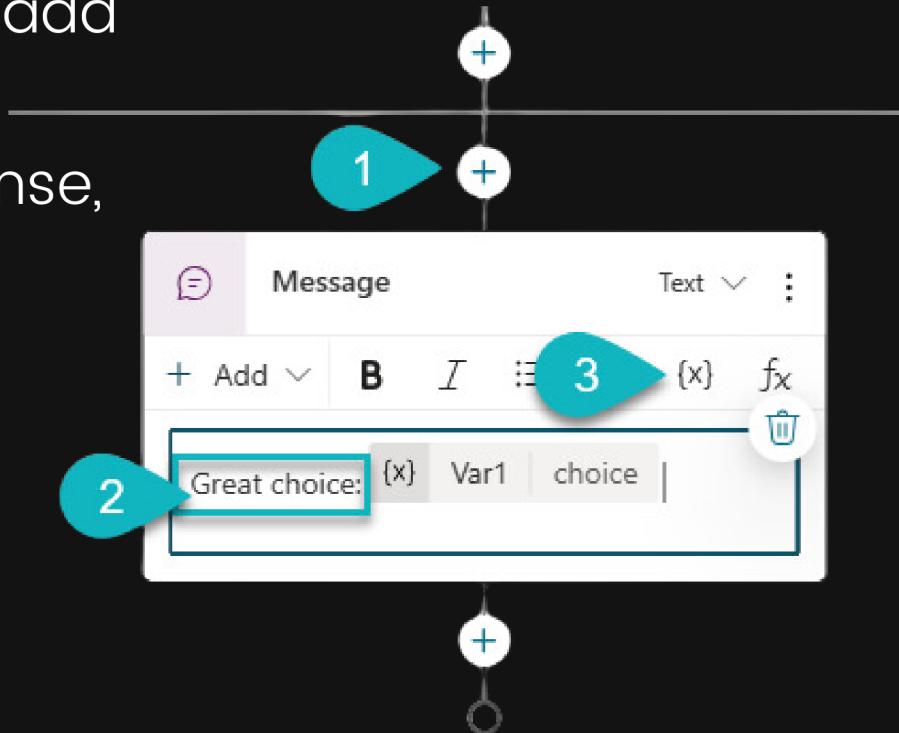


# Create a Topic from blank

## Step 4 - actions

Great, you've added options and now the copilot has set up branches for each choice and **All other conditions**. You can tailor responses for each branch individually, or create a common next step. Let's do the latter.

1. Click on the lowest + icon and add a **Send a message** node.
2. Here, type your copilot's response, like **Great choice**:
3. Repeat the user's selection by incorporating **Var1**, the variable storing their choice.
4. Hit **Save**, and voilà – you've successfully created your first custom topic!



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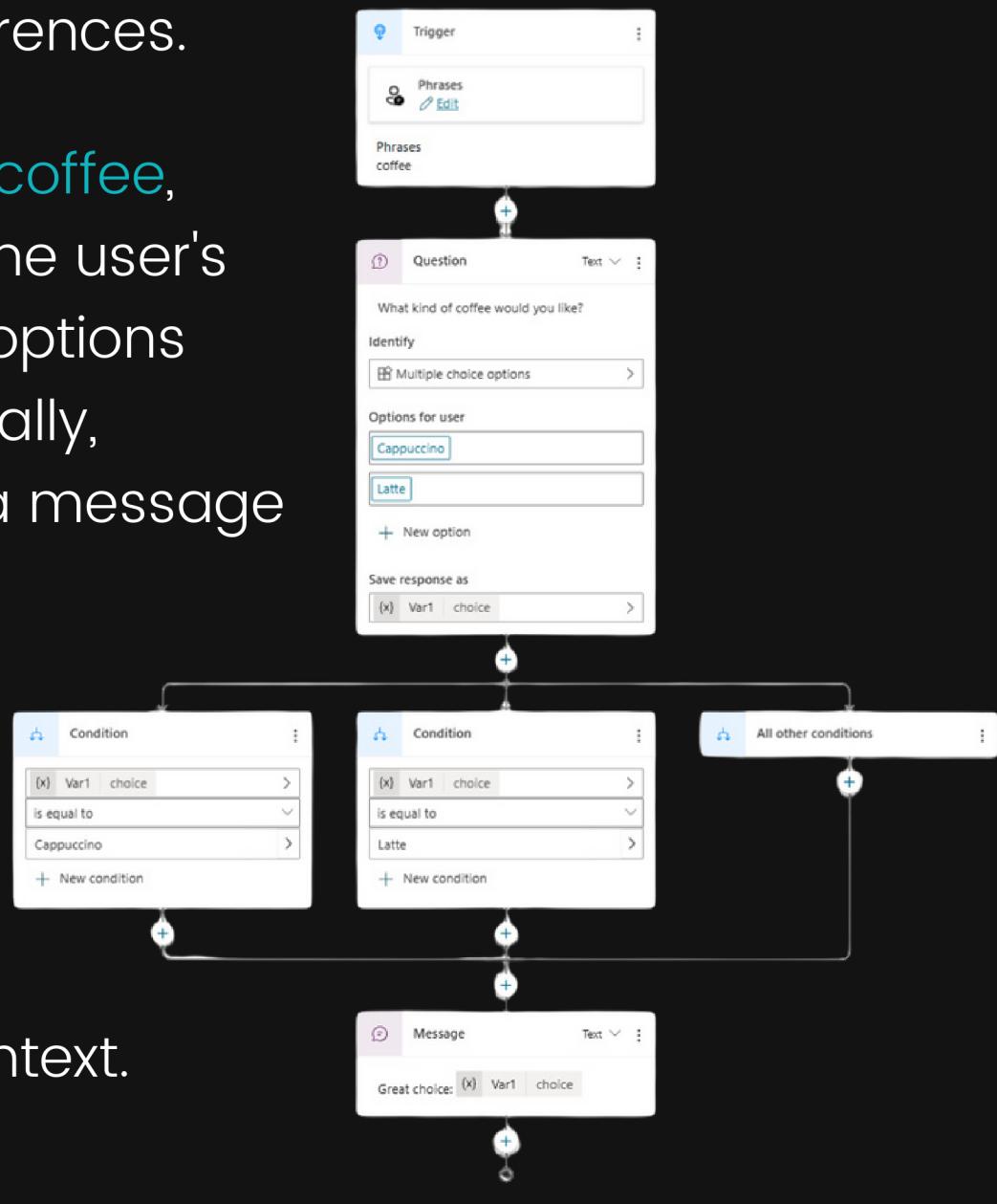


# Create a Topic from blank Topic summary

Our custom topic, **Coffee Order**, is designed to interact with users about their coffee preferences.

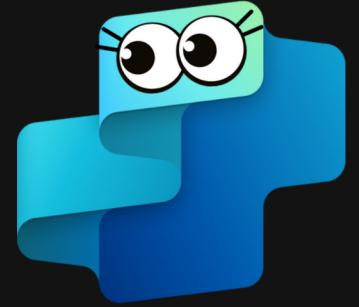
It starts with a trigger phrase, **coffee**, leading to a question asking the user's preferred type of coffee, with options like **Cappuccino** and **Latte**. Finally, it confirms the selection with a message like **Great choice**, and repeats the user's choice using the stored variable.

This topic showcases a simple yet interactive way to engage users in a specific context.



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# Today's Task: Design Custom Topic from blank

## 1. Create Your Topic

Follow the earlier steps to create a new custom topic in Copilot Studio, like "Coffee Order".

## 2. Set Up Trigger Phrases

Define key phrases that will trigger your topic, such as "I want coffee".

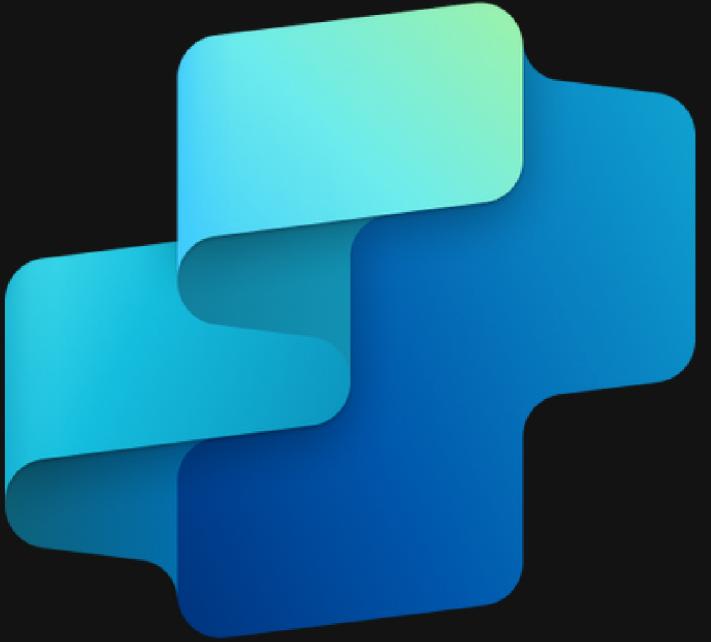
## 3. Craft Responses

Develop responses within your topic, including asking questions and offering choices like different coffee types.



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