Vital Enterprises AI Strategy - Action Items

From Ryan/Paul 1-on-1 meeting - December 3, 2025

The Big Picture Problem

The VE companies need more than "bolt-on AI" - they need to become **AI Native**. The difference:

- **AI Responsive/Bolt-on**: "Here's your existing process, let's add AI to automate it"
- **AI Native**: "If we started from scratch with AI, would we even have this process? What would be fundamentally better?"

Example: Would we ever create a "day-by-day" report if we started with AI, or would we create something entirely different that we can't even comprehend yet?

Culture Change Strategy

30/60/90 Day Framework

Need to develop a plan for each company that answers: **What do we do in the next X weeks to get people ready for AI transformation?**

Elements:

- ☐ Newsletter distribution to all VE employees
- ☐ Podcast distribution internally
- ☐ Feedback/survey mechanism (NOT incentivized - it's part of the job)
- ☐ Analytics on engagement (who's listening, what resonates)

The Core Challenge

> *"If everyone was 50% as motivated to figure out how AI can reinvent us as workers... I can't even imagine what we would be doing right now."*

People don't know what to ask for. They bring small problems ("I need a database") when they should be thinking bigger ("What do we do once we have the database in 20 minutes?").

Immediate Action Items

1. Hire an AI Implementation Leader

- ☐ **Create job posting** – Use AI to draft it
- ☐ **Post the job**
- ☐ **Start interviewing** – Even if we don't hire, the conversations will spark ideas

Role profile:

- NOT just a coder/implementer (though that's valuable too)
- A **culture change leader** who can:
  - Communicate and influence
  - Talk to executives (Eric, Nicole, Catherine, etc.)
  - Understand each business's needs
  - Build requirements through conversation
  - Help develop training content
  - Report weekly on progress

Budget thinking: ~$100k salary, but distributed across VE companies ($1k/company/month, rest at VE level) to "amp up everyone's capabilities"

Task for Paul & Ryan: Each think of 3 people from past work who could do this job – helps define the profile even if we don't hire them

2. Internal Newsletter to VE

- ☐ **Send December newsletter to all of VE**
- ☐ **Include survey/feedback mechanism** - "Which articles resonated? Why?"
- ☐ **Set expectation that feedback is required** - Part of the job, not optional
- ☐ **Track analytics** - Who's engaging, who's not

3. Continue Company Analysis

Paul has already started this work:

- ☐ Deep dive analysis on 9 VE companies using GPT, Claude, Gemini
- ☐ Consolidated reports per company
- ☐ Ranked by AI vulnerability (most at-risk at bottom, safest at top)
- ☐ Next step: Deep dive on each - "What could AI do to make them better?"

Companies analyzed:

- Top (safest): Strong even with AI disruption
- Bottom (most vulnerable): Causeway, Omnia, Nereus, Team Cinder

This analysis becomes the playbook for the new hire: "Start at the bottom and work your way up"

4. Build Quick Wins to Create Momentum

The Trevor Model:

- Trevor brought a real problem
- Paul built a solution in 24 hours
- Trevor is now engaged and seeing value

Replicate this:

- ☐ Sit down with Catherine about replacing Inflow (inventory system she doesn't like)
- ☐ Build for Novus - have fully functioning front-end/back-end ready for next meeting
- ☐ Each win frees up time → person can start engaging with AI themselves

Key Insights from Discussion

On Getting Buy-In

> *"I send Nicole the white paper... her feedback is 'these images are a little busy.' That's not the fucking point. The point is I created this and know nothing about her business, and it's really pretty good."*

People are missing the meta-message. They focus on the artifact, not the capability.

On AI Native Thinking

> *"If I started from AI, would I have ever created a day-by-day? Or would I have created this other thing that's way better that I can't even comprehend?"*

The existing systems/processes are the **limiting factor** when you bolt AI onto them.

On Speed

> *"You said you're going to put everyone out of work by 2? No, we're just fucking upping. That's the speed... Multiple [tasks] per day need to be checked off. And then they need to be services on your webpage tomorrow."*

On the Connection Manager Analogy

Paul: "I never would have needed Connection Manager. I would have just told AI to set all my settings for the radius server, and it would go do it."

The feature set becomes **endless** - limited only by what the hardware/system can do, not what we pre-programmed.

Companies Needing Immediate Attention

Per the vulnerability analysis:

Priority	Company	Status
High	Causeway	At risk – "2 people doing AI coding, but coding something that's dead"
High	Omnia	Needs pivot
High	Nereus	Needs pivot
High	Team Cinder	BJ "did not believe it"
Medium	SIFT	White paper sent, no response
Active	Novus	Engaged – Eric/Fawcett interested, build demo for next meeting
Active	Tonsil Tech/D2C	Trevor engaged – inventory tool being built

What Success Looks Like

1. **Newsletter goes out** – With feedback mechanism, expectation of engagement
2. **Job posted** – Start seeing candidates, refining what we need
3. **Quick wins accumulate** – Each tool built frees up time, builds believers
4. **Culture shifts** – People start asking "what can AI do?" not "here's my manual process"
5. **AI Native thinking emerges** – People imagine fundamentally different approaches, not just automation

Ryan's Summary

> *"That is our strategy on the culture change: Newsletter, podcast, survey feedback, job rec open, start interviews."*

> *"The thing you started [company analysis], keep it going. That could be [the playbook for] our new hire - here's all the companies, start at the bottom and work your way up."*