Class 2 - Detailed Step-by-Step Summary

1. Setting Up Python Environment: We started the session by ensuring Python was properly installed and working. The instructor guided us through checking the Python installation using the terminal. Then, we opened Visual Studio Code (VS Code) and configured the Python interpreter to make sure our environment was ready for coding. The importance of having Python properly set up before moving to automation tools was emphasized.

2. Introduction to n8n: After setting up Python, we moved towards understanding and using n8n, an automation tool. The instructor explained the purpose of n8n as a workflow automation tool where we can create workflows with different nodes to handle various tasks. The environment setup for n8n was discussed, including how to run it in the browser and access the editor.

3. Creating the First Workflow: We created our very first workflow in n8n by starting with a “Manual Trigger” node. This node helps us manually execute workflows for testing purposes. Then, we added a “Set” node, which allows us to define and pass static values. For example, we created fields like “name” and “age” in the Set node to understand how data flows in the workflow.

4. Email Automation Using Gmail Node: Next, we connected Gmail with n8n. The instructor demonstrated how to add a “Gmail” node in the workflow and authenticate the account. Once connected, we configured the Gmail node to send emails automatically. For practice, we used values from the Set node (like name and age) and inserted them into the email body, so the email became dynamic and personalized.

5. Understanding Workflow Execution: We tested the workflow by triggering it manually. The Manual Trigger activated the workflow, passed data to the Set node, and finally sent an email through the Gmail node. This demonstrated how workflows are executed step by step in n8n and how data flows between nodes.

6. Scheduling Workflows: The instructor then showed us how to schedule workflows. Instead of manually triggering them, we can use the “Cron” node to run workflows automatically at specific times (e.g., daily at 9 AM). This was explained as an essential feature for automating repetitive tasks without manual intervention.

7. Concept of Agentic AI: Towards the end, we were introduced to the concept of Agentic AI. The instructor explained that Agentic AI is about creating workflows and automation where AI can take actions, not just provide responses. For example, instead of just generating text, AI could be set up to send that text as an email, store it in a database, or trigger another workflow.

8. Troubleshooting & Debugging: We also covered some basic troubleshooting steps. For instance, if Gmail authentication fails, we were taught to check credentials, permissions, and n8n settings. Similarly, if data is not being passed correctly, we can use the execution log in n8n to see where the workflow might be breaking.

9. Assignments: The class ended with assignments. We were asked to create a workflow that takes data from a Set node and sends it via Gmail automatically. Additionally, another assignment involved scheduling a workflow with the Cron node to ensure we understood both triggering and scheduling.

10. Recap & Next Steps: The session concluded with a recap of the main topics: Python setup, n8n basics, creating workflows, email automation, scheduling, and the idea of Agentic AI. The instructor also gave us a preview of what to expect in the next class: deeper integration with APIs and exploring more advanced automation use cases.