The Executive's AI Roadmap

Contributor Style Guide

Book Title: The Executive's AI Roadmap: How to Adopt, Scale, and Govern AI with Confidence
Authors: Alain Trottier, CTO, HEaiLTHCaiRE and Adam Mayer, Associate CFO, Medical University of South Carolina
Category: Business/Technology/Management
Publication Goal: 6 months from contract signing

Executive Summary

This style guide ensures consistency and quality across all contributions to "The Executive's AI Roadmap." Our book provides the first comprehensive playbook for executives to transform AI from scattered experiments into measurable, board-ready portfolios. Every contribution must serve our core mission: helping executives move beyond "pilot purgatory" to scaled AI success.

1. Target Audience

Primary Readers

- **C-suite executives** (CEO, CTO, CIO, CFO) at organizations with 1,000+ employees
- **Senior leaders** in regulated industries (healthcare, finance, education)
- **Board members** and institutional investors overseeing AI initiatives
- **AI governance professionals** implementing enterprise frameworks

Reader Characteristics

- **Time-constrained:** Prefer executive summaries and actionable insights
- **Results-oriented:** Want proven frameworks over theoretical discussions
- **Risk-conscious:** Need governance and compliance guidance
- **Strategy-focused:** Seek competitive advantage through AI adoption

2. Content Standards

Core Tone Requirements

- **Professional:** Business-appropriate language throughout
- **Authoritative:** Draw from real experience and proven results
- **Accessible:** Avoid technical jargon; explain necessary terms
- **Practical:** Focus on actionable insights over abstract concepts

Writing Style Guidelines

- **Active voice preferred:** "We implemented the framework" vs. "The framework was implemented"
- **Concise sentences:** Average 15-20 words per sentence
- **Clear paragraphs:** 3-5 sentences maximum per paragraph
- **Scannable format:** Use subheadings, bullet points, and numbered lists

3. Content Structure Requirements

Standard Framework for All Contributions

Executive Summary (Required)

- **Length:** 2-3 sentences
- **Content:** Key insight, main benefit, primary recommendation
- **Purpose:** Enable busy executives to grasp core value immediately

Key Points Section

- **Format:** 3-5 main points maximum
- **Structure:** Problem → Solution → Outcome
- **Evidence:** Data, metrics, or concrete examples for each point

Actionable Insights

- **Specificity:** Clear next steps readers can implement
- **Timeframes:** Include realistic implementation timelines
- **Resources:** Mention tools, frameworks, or processes needed

Contribution Types and Specific Requirements

Quick Insights (30 minutes)

- **Format:** 1-3 paragraphs
- **Focus:** Single key lesson or mistake avoided
- **Example:** "The biggest oversight in our AI pilot was..."

Short Stories (1-2 hours)

- **Length:** 500-1,000 words
- **Structure:** Context → Challenge → Solution → Results → Lessons
- **Metrics:** Include quantifiable outcomes when possible

Problem Definitions (1-2 hours)

- **Framework:** Symptoms → Root Causes → Business Impact → Desired Outcomes
- **Specificity:** Detailed enough for others to recognize similar situations
- **Solutions:** Optional, but helpful if attempted

Industry Perspectives (2-3 hours)

- **Scope:** Industry-wide trends and challenges
- **Authority:** Draw from broad experience or industry data
- **Forward-looking:** Include predictions or recommendations

Executive Interviews

- **Format:** Q&A responses to provided template
- **Depth:** Detailed answers with specific examples
- **Candor:** Honest assessments, including failures and pivots

4. Evidence and Data Requirements

Supporting Claims

- **Quantifiable metrics** when available (percentages, dollar amounts, timeframes)
- **Specific examples** rather than generic statements
- **Industry benchmarks** or comparative data where relevant
- **Source attribution** for external data or research

Acceptable Evidence Types

- **Performance metrics:** ROI, efficiency gains, cost reductions
- **Implementation data:** Timeline, resource requirements, success rates
- **Stakeholder feedback:** Board responses, employee adoption rates
- **Industry research:** Published studies, analyst reports, survey data

Evidence Standards

- **Recent data preferred:** Within 2-3 years when possible
- **Credible sources:** Industry analysts, academic research, government data
- **Transparent methodology:** Explain how metrics were calculated
- **Context provided:** Industry, company size, timeframe of results

5. Technical Content Guidelines

AI Terminology

- **Define acronyms** on first use: "Machine Learning (ML)"
- **Explain technical concepts** in business terms
- **Avoid jargon** unless essential; provide alternatives when possible
- **Consistent terminology** throughout (refer to provided glossary)

Technology References

- **Business impact focus:** Lead with outcomes, not technical details

- **Practical applications:** How technology serves business objectives
- **Implementation considerations:** Resources, skills, or infrastructure needed
- **Risk factors:** Potential challenges or limitations to address

6. Compliance and Legal Considerations

Confidentiality Requirements

- **No proprietary information** without explicit permission
- **Anonymize examples** when requested by contributors
- **Generic company references:** "A Fortune 500 manufacturer" vs. specific names
- **Approval process:** Contributors review final content before publication

Regulatory Sensitivity

- **Industry-specific compliance** (HIPAA, SOX, GDPR) considerations
- **Risk assessment guidance** without providing legal advice
- **Best practices focus** rather than regulatory interpretation
- **Expert review:** Legal and compliance professionals review relevant sections

7. Formatting and Style Conventions

Headers and Organization

Main Topic (H1)
Key Section (H2)
Subsection (H3)
Detail Level (H4)

Lists and Bullets

- **Parallel structure:** Consistent grammatical format
- **Logical order:** Priority, chronological, or categorical
- **Appropriate depth:** 2-3 levels maximum

Emphasis and Highlighting

- **Bold** for key terms and important concepts
- *Italics* for emphasis or foreign terms
- **Quotes** for direct statements or memorable insights
- `Code style` for technical terms or system names

Numbers and Data

- **Spell out numbers** one through nine; use numerals for 10+
- **Percentage format:** Use % symbol with numbers

- **Dollar amounts:** $1.2 million, $50,000, etc.
- **Dates:** Month Day, Year format

8. Review and Editing Process

Contributor Responsibilities

1. **Self-edit** for clarity, accuracy, and completeness
2. **Fact-check** all claims and data points
3. **Review compliance** with confidentiality requirements
4. **Submit by deadline** with contact information for follow-up

Editorial Process

1. **Content review** for alignment with book objectives
2. **Style consistency** editing across all contributions
3. **Technical accuracy** verification by subject matter experts
4. **Legal review** for compliance and risk assessment
5. **Contributor approval** of final edited content

Quality Standards

- **Accuracy:** All claims verified and properly sourced
- **Relevance:** Direct connection to executive AI challenges
- **Clarity:** Accessible to target audience without expertise
- **Completeness:** Sufficient detail for practical application

9. Submission Guidelines

Required Information

- **Contributor Details**
  - Full name and title
  - Organization and industry
  - Contact information
  - LinkedIn profile (optional)
  - Brief bio (50-100 words)

Content Submission Format

- **File format:** plain text in email body. Attachments won't be opened.
- **Email subject:** "AI Roadmap Contribution - [Your Name]"
- **Submission address:** AlainTrottier@heailthcaire.com

Deadlines and Timeline

- **Initial submissions:** Rolling acceptance
- **Final deadline:** [To be specified based on publication schedule]
- **Review period:** 2-3 weeks for contributor feedback
- **Publication timeline:** 6 months from contract signing

10. Recognition and Attribution

Contributor Recognition

- **Author byline** for substantial contributions (chapters, major sections)
- **Contributor credit** for insights, case studies, and examples
- **Professional bio** included with significant contributions
- **LinkedIn and website links** when appropriate
- **Compensation** will not be provided.

Professional Benefits

- **Published author** status for resume and LinkedIn
- **Industry recognition** as AI thought leader
- **Network expansion** through connection with other contributors
- **Speaking opportunities** at conferences and industry events

11. Examples of Effective Contributions

Strong Opening Example

"Our first AI victory nearly derailed our entire program. The chatbot reduced customer service calls by 23%, which prompted the board to fast-track five more AI projects. Six months later, we realized we'd prioritized flashy demos over transformational business impact. The corrective action was establishing a value assessment framework that now evaluates every AI initiative against three criteria: measurable business outcomes, scalability potential, and strategic alignment."

Weak Opening (Avoid This)

"AI is transforming business operations across industries through advanced machine learning algorithms and sophisticated data processing capabilities that enable organizations to optimize processes and improve decision-making."

Data Integration Example

"Implementation required 12 weeks and $180,000 in consultant fees, but delivered $2.1 million in first-year savings through 31% reduction in manual processing time and 89% improvement in accuracy rates."

12. Contact Information

Editorial Team

- **Primary Contact & Questions:** AlainTrottier@heailthcaire.com

Response Times

- **Submission acknowledgment:** 2 business days
- **Initial review feedback:** 2-3 weeks
- **Final approval process:** 1-2 weeks