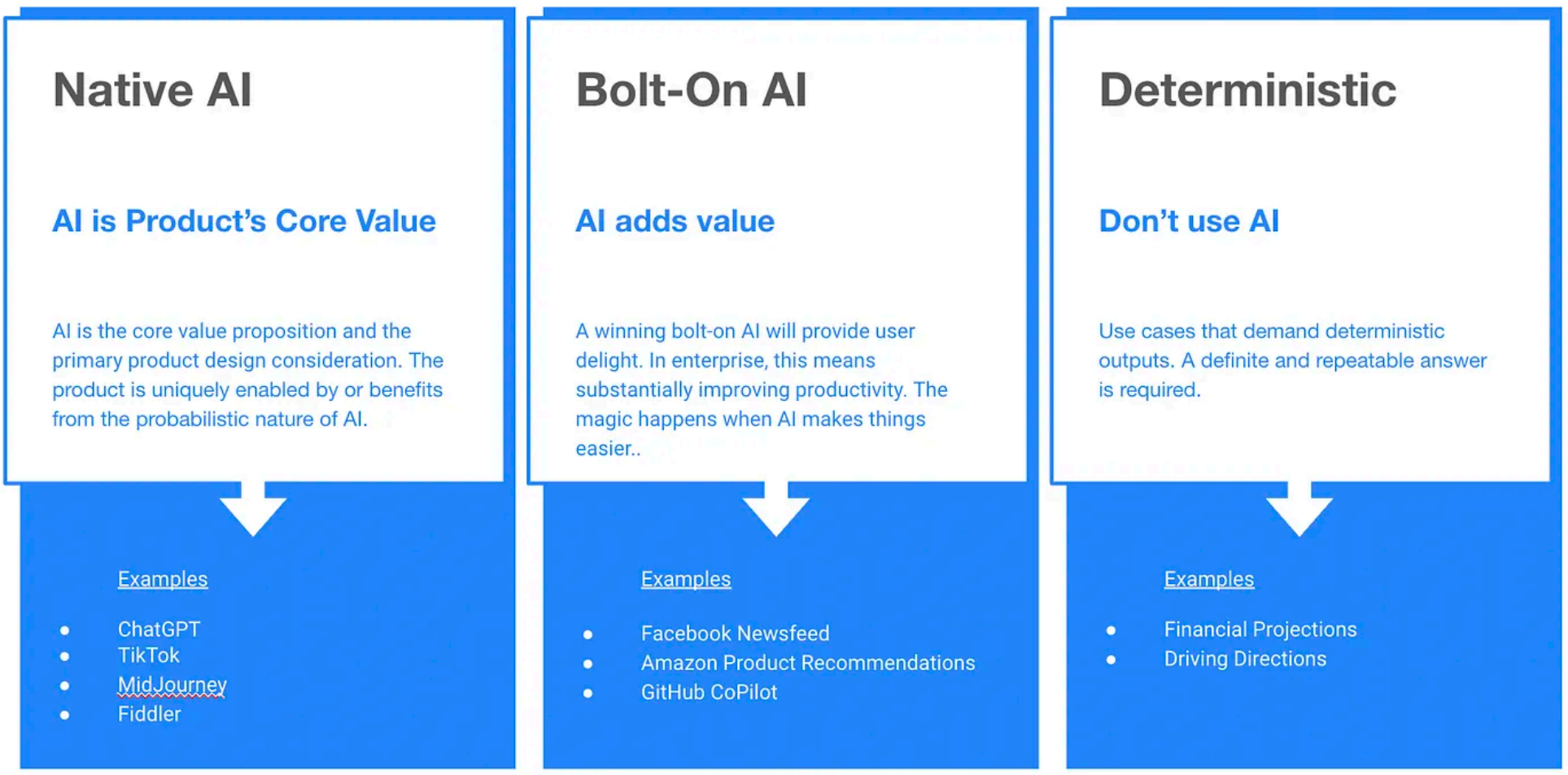
Defining your own AI strategy

LESSON 2

Understand the Problem

Understand the problem you are trying to solve with AI. If you're considering multiple problems and domains you'll need to build a portfolio of AI investments and have a prioritization framework in place as well. Here are questions to ask in order to understand the problem:

1. Does it align with current company priorities?
2. **Impact:** What is the impact? How big is the problem? Is it big enough to invest in? Make sure that the problem is big enough and important enough. This piece will help with prioritization. Some ways to assess impact
    1. **Users:** Quantify it using the number of users or customers it would touch.
    2. **$$:** Is it something you can charge for?
    3. **Ease of use/better experience:** Would it automate something? Would it simplify existing workflows? Provide a better experience that would delight users/customers?
3. **Competition:** What does the competitive landscape look like? Are your competitors implementing AI features that will entrench them further and pose a risk to your business? Where is the market moving? Will AI differentiate your company? If you don't implement AI will this mean that you fall behind competitors?
4. **Disruptive vs Sustaining** Is AI that you're considering disruptive meaning it's Native AI (a product with AI as the core value prop)? This is likely a riskier proposition where you will be building from scratch and innovating breaking new ground in the industry. Is your AI sustaining and will make your business stronger?



Tech Maturity and Fit

1. Why is AI a good fit? Can you have the accuracy you need to make it worthwhile as an investment (caveat: in some cases, ie Generative AI for images, you may not need accuracy)?
2. Does building AI play well with the current tech stack? For example at Salesforce we were using a lot of Oracle and that made it really hard. Can you solve the problem without AI faster and cheaper?
3. Do you have data infra and models for AI development and maintenance?
4. Can you buy off the shelf instead?
5. Do you have people who have expertise and can build and maintain AI in perpetuity? For example you'll need to figure out monitoring to make sure AI remains robust once built.
6. How often do you need to retrain your models?
7. **Monitoring** You will need Monitoring (I recommend fiddler.ai) for your AI.
8. **Responsible AI** - what are the risks and can you spend cycles doing the Responsible AI evaluation and maintenance? It's yet another expense but one worth investing in if AI is core (for example AI decides loan eligibility). You may need to evaluate fairness, privacy, security, robustness, safety, and transparency depending on the problem you're solving.

Costs and Tradeoffs

1. How much will it cost in terms of time and infra you need to secure? You may want to take an inventory of current AI. Is it performing well? Should it stay or go?
2. What tradeoffs do you need to make, what else will you not be doing while building your AI? Ensure you have the right metrics to make an informed decision regarding tradeoffs.