

# COAST 2Page Handout

COAST Method: One-Pager Handout

A Framework for Disciplined AI-Assisted Work

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## The Core Idea

AI should extend your thinking—not replace it. The COAST Method is a five-rule framework that turns AI from an echo chamber into an engine for robust, accountable work.

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## The 5 Rules (COAST)

### C Letter Rule What It Means

**C** Clarity Before Proliferation Use AI only when it reduces cognitive load. Avoid tool sprawl.

**O** One Primary, Many Adversaries Designate one AI for continuity (e.g., your Claude). Use foreign AI only to critique.

**A** Adversarial Engagement Is Discipline Stress-test your work with a different AI. Ask it to attack—not improve—your ideas.

**S** Save Transcripts Log key interactions. Transcripts are your audit trail, not just chats.

**T** Thinker Stays You -You own the conclusions, the framing, and the accountability. AI is a tool—not a co-author.

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## How to Start This Week

### Step 1: Pick a high-stakes deliverable

- A proposal, a design doc, a strategy brief, a policy draft.

### Step 2: Develop it with your Primary AI

- Use your usual, context-aware AI (e.g., your Claude).
- Refine, synthesize, polish.

### Step 3: Stress-test it with a Foreign AI

- Open a different AI (e.g., ChatGPT, a cleared session, a colleague's instance).
- Paste your work and prompt:

"Act as a hostile reviewer. Find the three weakest points in this argument. Ignore typos—focus on logic, assumptions, and blind spots."

#### Step 4: Compare and refine

- Don't accept the Foreign AI's critique blindly.
  - Use it to pressure-test your own thinking.
  - Final decisions stay with you.
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#### Example Prompts for Adversarial AI

##### Scenario Adversarial Prompt

Project Proposal "Assume this project will fail. What non-obvious factor (political, technical, or human) did we overlook?"

Technical Design "Critique this architecture purely from a security or scalability standpoint. Where does it over-rely on optimistic assumptions?"

Strategic Brief "Challenge the core premise. What if the opposite of our main assumption is true?"

Policy Draft "Identify how this could be misused, gamed, or create unintended consequences for a group we haven't considered."

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#### Why This Isn't Extra Work—It's Risk Management

- Without COAST: AI reinforces your biases. Decisions feel easier but are less robust.
  - With COAST: You get constructive disagreement before the meeting, not after. You have an audit trail. You remain accountable.
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#### Keep This Handy

Stick this on your desk or save it as a cheat sheet. Use COAST when:

- The stakes are high
  - The answer feels too easy
  - You've been in the weeds too long
  - You need to defend your thinking later
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