1. Welcome

Purpose of This Section

Set expectations and reduce intimidation. Many attendees will think AI agents are “advanced” or “only for experts.”

What the Presenter Should Explain

- This workshop focuses on **understanding concepts first**, then building visually.
- Participants are not expected to know AI, ML, or coding deeply.
- By the end, they will **build a simple AI agent**, not just use ChatGPT.

Key Message

> “Today is about understanding *how AI agents think and act*, not memorizing definitions.”

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2. What Is an AI Agent?

Formal Definition (IBM)

IBM defines an AI agent as:

> A system that leverages external tools and data sources to execute tasks with minimal human intervention, using machine learning models that mimic human decision-making in real time.

How to Explain This Simply

Break the definition into parts:

- **System** → Not just a chatbot, but multiple components working together
- **External tools & data** → APIs, databases, calendars, files

- **Minimal human intervention** → Doesn't need step-by-step instructions
- **Decision-making** → Chooses actions dynamically

Plain-Language Definition

An AI agent is an intelligent system that:

- Observes its environment
- Understands goals
- Decides what to do
- Takes action autonomously

Key Teaching Point

An AI agent **does not wait** for every instruction.
It works *on behalf of the user*.

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3. Difference Between AI Agent, LLM, and Automation

This section is critical. Many people confuse these concepts.

A. Traditional Automated Systems

What They Are

- Rule-based systems
- Fully deterministic
- No learning or reasoning

Examples

- Python scripts

- Excel formulas
- If–else logic
- Scheduled tasks

Key Limitation

They only do **exactly** what they are programmed to do.

If something unexpected happens, the system fails.

B. AI Assistant

What It Is

An AI assistant is:

- Reactive
- User-driven
- Conversation-based

Examples

- Siri
- Alexa
- Basic ChatGPT usage

Key Characteristics

- Waits for commands
- Does not set goals
- Does not plan ahead

- Does not act independently

Important Distinction

Even though AI assistants use LLMs, **they are not agents**.

C. AI Agent

What Makes It Different

AI agents are:

- Goal-oriented
- Proactive
- Autonomous

Core Abilities

- Observe inputs and context
- Reason about what to do next
- Choose actions
- Use tools
- Adapt when conditions change

Teaching Analogy

- Automation = calculator
- Assistant = helpful receptionist
- Agent = personal assistant who plans your day

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4. Components of an AI Agent (Building Blocks)

Based on **Salesforce AI Agent Architecture**

A. Actions and Topics

What This Means

- Topics = categories of user intent
- Actions = operations the agent can perform

How It Works

1. User sends a request
2. Agent classifies the request into a topic
3. Agent executes actions linked to that topic
4. Agent may ask follow-up questions

Why It Matters

This is how agents **scale** and **stay organized**.

B. Large Language Model (LLM)

Role of the LLM

The LLM:

- Understands natural language
- Generates responses
- Supports reasoning and planning

Important Clarification

The LLM is **not the agent**.
It is one **component** of the agent.

Key Teaching Line

> "The LLM is the brain's language center, not the decision-maker."

C. Reasoning Engine

What It Does

The reasoning engine:

- Interprets triggers
- Classifies requests
- Builds plans
- Selects actions
- Controls execution flow

Relationship with the LLM

- LLM suggests possibilities
- Reasoning engine decides the sequence

This separation is what enables **agentic behavior**.

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5. Benefits, Risks, and Future of AI Agents

Benefits

- Productivity
- Complex problem-solving

- Cross-industry impact

Risks

- Security vulnerabilities
- Unpredictable behavior
- Ethical accountability

Future (Forbes 2026 Predictions)

- Agent-based workplaces
- Human–AI teams
- Multi-agent orchestration

Critical Warning to Emphasize

> “Autonomy increases power — and responsibility.”