

THE CEO KIT

9 AI HACKS

EVERY CEO SHOULD BE USING

SAVE TIME | MAKE BETTER DECISIONS | BUILD A BUSINESS THAT
DEPENDS LESS ON YOU

From holding the business together to owning a business that can hold its own.

A WAYNE SALMANS COACHING GUIDE

BEFORE YOU START

The Goal Is Not More AI. It Is More Leverage.

After more than 15 years coaching and training over 6,000 entrepreneurs and leaders, I keep seeing successful CEOs run into the same ceiling: there are more decisions, conversations, opportunities, and requests than there are hours to carry them. For most of business history, the answer was to work longer, hire faster, or personally absorb more weight.

AI changes the equation, but only when it helps the business depend less on you. I do not teach CEOs to replace their judgment, relationships, or vision with technology. I teach them to remove the drafting, sorting, summarizing, research, and first-pass thinking that never required a CEO in the first place.

OWNER-OPERATOR: The business works because of you.

OWNER: The business works through people, processes, and systems you built.

THE CEO LEVERAGE FILTER

ONLY ME	MY TEAM	AI
Vision and direction	Ownership and execution	First drafts
Final judgment	Coordination	Sorting and summaries
Sensitive relationships	Accountability	Research scans
Authority and approval	Quality control	Documentation

Before doing anything yourself, ask: Does this require my judgment, or has it simply always required my time?

Read the nine hacks, then use the scorecard near the end of the guide to identify the single workflow that would give you the most immediate leverage. Install that one first.

**HACK
01**

The Inbox Triage System

THE PROBLEM

One of the first things I look at with a new CEO client is who controls their attention. If email stays open all day, the answer is usually everyone else. The real cost is not just the minutes spent reading messages. It is the constant switching between other people's priorities and the work only the CEO can do.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

I teach CEOs to stop treating the inbox like a to-do list. It should be a decision queue. AI can perform the first sort, identify what needs your voice, suggest what should be delegated, and draft routine replies. You keep the judgment. AI removes the sorting.

HOW IT WORKS

Choose one or two protected triage blocks each day. Give selected messages to an approved AI assistant such as ChatGPT or Claude, along with your priorities and key relationships. Review the recommendations, adjust the tone, delegate, and send. The goal is not faster email. It is getting your attention back.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Choose one or two fixed inbox triage blocks and protect them like meetings.
2. Give AI selected messages plus your current priorities and important relationships.
3. Review the sort, delegate what should move, and send the approved replies.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Act as my executive inbox chief of staff. My current priorities are [paste]. My key relationships or sensitive issues are [paste]. Review the emails below and sort each into: CEO Must Respond, Delegate, Routine Reply, or No Action. For every email, give me the recommended next action and a one-sentence reason. Suggest an owner for anything delegated. Draft routine replies in fewer than 120 words using a direct, warm, no-fluff tone. Flag anything sensitive, ambiguous, or missing context. Do not invent facts. Emails: [paste].

**HACK
02**

Meetings That Write Themselves

THE PROBLEM

I have watched productive meetings create almost no progress because the follow-through was never made clear. Decisions get buried in notes, action items leave without owners, and by Friday the team remembers the same conversation three different ways.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

A phrase I use with clients is: the meeting is not finished when everyone leaves. It is finished when the decisions, owners, deadlines, and open questions are clear. AI can build that operating record while you stay present in the conversation.

HOW IT WORKS

Use an approved recording or transcription tool for meetings that create decisions or commitments. Fathom is one tool many leaders use for this. Immediately afterward, have AI create the executive summary, action register, risks, and follow-up message. Send it while the conversation is still fresh.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Capture the meeting using your approved recording or transcription process.
2. Run the transcript through the prompt before starting your next meeting.
3. Confirm owners and dates, then send the follow-up while the context is fresh.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Turn this meeting transcript into an executive follow-through brief. Include: 1) the three most important decisions, 2) every action item with owner and due date, 3) open questions, 4) risks or dependencies, and 5) anything discussed without a clear decision. Then draft a short follow-up email that is direct, positive, and accountability-focused. Do not assign an owner or deadline unless it is stated. Mark missing information as NEEDS CONFIRMATION. Transcript: [paste].

HACK

03

Walk Into Every Meeting Already Prepped

THE PROBLEM

I can usually tell when a leader prepared for a meeting and when they spent the final ten minutes searching old emails and trying to remember where the relationship left off. That scramble does more than waste time. It changes the posture you bring into the room.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

Preparation should not depend on whether your calendar happened to leave you a quiet hour. AI can assemble a decision-ready brief from the context you already have so you enter clear on the objective, the relationship, the likely concerns, and the questions that matter.

HOW IT WORKS

Gather the relevant emails, notes, website information, and desired outcome. Ask AI for a one-page briefing that separates known facts from reasonable assumptions and gives you a strong opening, three questions, likely risks, and a clear way to close. Five focused minutes of review can change the quality of the entire conversation.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Collect the context already available on the person, company, and opportunity.
2. Tell AI the outcome you want and ask for a one-page executive briefing.
3. Review the brief five minutes before the meeting and choose your three questions.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Prepare a one-page executive briefing for my meeting with [name/company]. My desired outcome is [paste]. Here is the context I have: [paste]. Organize the brief into: Known Facts, Likely Priorities, Relationship History, Opportunities, Risks, and Missing Information. Give me a strong opening, three sharp questions, two points I should avoid assuming, and a clear closing question. Separate verified information from inference and do not invent details.

HACK

04

Content in Your Voice, Not Your Time

THE PROBLEM

Many CEOs I coach know they should share more of what they have learned, but they do not have hours to stare at a blank page. When the work is completely outsourced, the words may become polished while the founder's actual point of view slowly disappears.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

I do not want AI to manufacture your voice. I want it to help you use your voice with less effort. You supply the thinking, story, conviction, and standard. AI supplies the structure and first draft. The perspective stays yours.

HOW IT WORKS

Record a short voice memo when an idea is fresh. Talk as if you were explaining it to a smart client across the table. Transcribe it, add two or three examples of your strongest writing, and let AI create the first draft. Then edit only where it stops sounding like you.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Capture one idea, lesson, opinion, or client story as a two-minute voice memo.
2. Give AI the transcript, audience, purpose, and examples of your actual voice.
3. Review every fact and edit only what does not sound or feel like you.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Turn the transcript below into a LinkedIn post for [audience]. The purpose is to [teach, challenge, inspire, or invite]. Preserve my point of view, story, emotional tone, and natural phrasing. Use short sentences, a strong opening, clean spacing, and one clear takeaway. Do not add facts, achievements, or client results that I did not provide. Give me three opening options, then one complete post. Match the voice in these examples: [paste examples]. Transcript: [paste].

HACK

05

A Thinking Partner That's Always Available

THE PROBLEM

Some of the most expensive decisions in business are made by capable people who had nobody available to challenge their reasoning in the moment. The danger is not making decisions alone. It is making them without exposing the assumptions underneath them.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

I would never tell a CEO to surrender judgment to a machine. I do encourage them to use AI to make their thinking harder to fool. A good sparring prompt can argue the opposing case, identify missing information, and separate reversible risks from irreversible ones.

HOW IT WORKS

Before a significant decision, write out the situation, desired outcome, constraints, options, and current lean. Ask AI to challenge the reasoning. Use the output the same way you would use counsel from a sharp advisor: as input that strengthens your judgment, never replaces it.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Describe the decision, desired outcome, constraints, options, and current lean.
2. Ask AI to challenge assumptions and build the strongest opposing argument.
3. Identify what you still need to learn, then make the final decision yourself.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Act as a rigorous decision sparring partner. The decision is [paste]. The outcome I want is [paste]. My constraints are [paste]. My options are [paste], and I currently lean toward [paste]. Identify my assumptions, build the strongest case against my current lean, separate reversible risks from irreversible risks, and name the information that could materially change the decision. Give me five questions I should answer before I decide. Do not make the decision for me.

**HACK
06**

Turn Your Head Into an SOP

THE PROBLEM

When I hear a founder explain the same process for the third time, I know we are no longer dealing with a people problem. We are dealing with a missing system. Until the process leaves the founder's head, the CEO remains the trainer, quality-control department, and exception handler.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

My rule is simple: if you have explained it more than twice, it is asking to become a system. AI can turn a rough explanation into a strong first draft, but the owner and quality standard still have to move to the team. Documentation without ownership is just a prettier bottleneck.

HOW IT WORKS

Record yourself completing or explaining the process exactly as you would teach it. Give the transcript to AI and ask for a complete SOP with purpose, owner, inputs, steps, quality checks, exceptions, and escalation rules. Then have the person who owns the outcome test and improve it.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Choose one process you have explained repeatedly and record yourself teaching it.
2. Use AI to convert the transcript into a structured SOP with clear standards.
3. Assign the SOP to the person who owns the outcome and have them test it.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Act as an operations designer. Turn this transcript into an SOP a capable new team member can follow without me in the room. Include: purpose, owner, trigger, required inputs, numbered steps, quality-control checklist, common mistakes, exceptions, escalation rules, and the result that proves the process is complete. Flag anything unclear or missing instead of guessing. End with three questions the process owner should answer before the SOP is approved. Transcript: [paste].

**HACK
07**

Research at the Speed of Curiosity

THE PROBLEM

The CEOs I work with are rarely short on questions. They are short on time to investigate them. Markets move, competitors change, and opportunities appear while the leader is still carrying yesterday's unanswered questions. Too often the decision moves forward on instinct alone.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

I recommend using AI for the first pass, not the final truth. Not every question deserves a full research project. AI can map the landscape, surface uncertainty, and show you where deeper investigation would materially improve the decision.

HOW IT WORKS

Keep a running list of strategic questions. Use a research-focused tool such as Perplexity for a sourced scan, then separate verified facts from interpretation and unknowns. Go deeper only when the cost of being wrong justifies the additional time.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Capture strategic questions as they surface instead of opening another browser tab.
2. Ask AI for a sourced scan that separates facts, inference, and missing information.
3. Invest in deeper research only when the decision and downside justify it.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Create an executive market scan on [topic or question] for a company like [describe]. Cover current trends, customer behavior, competitor moves, risks, and opportunities. Separate the output into Verified Facts, Reasonable Inferences, and Important Unknowns. Cite the source and publication date for every material factual claim. Highlight any source conflicts or outdated information. End with one opportunity, one threat, and the three questions that deserve deeper research before a decision is made.

**HACK
08**

The Weekly Reset

THE PROBLEM

I have seen too many strong leaders end Friday physically done but mentally still carrying the entire week. Unfinished decisions, half-kept promises, and open loops roll straight into Monday, so the next week begins with reaction before intention.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

High performance requires more than effort. It requires review. The best operators I coach do not trust themselves to remember everything. They create a short weekly rhythm that turns mental clutter into priorities, ownership, and calendar commitments.

HOW IT WORKS

Every Friday afternoon or Sunday evening, dictate the week's wins, misses, decisions, and open loops. Ask AI to organize the information, identify the three priorities, and sort the next actions through the Only Me, My Team, or AI filter. You start Monday with a plan instead of a pile.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Block twenty minutes at the same time every week for a complete brain dump.
2. Have AI identify wins, misses, open loops, decisions, and next-week priorities.
3. Move each action to your calendar, a team owner, or an AI-supported workflow.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

Act as my weekly executive review partner. Organize the brain dump below into: Wins, Misses, Decisions Made, Open Loops, and Lessons. Identify the three priorities that would make next week successful. For every next action, classify it as Only Me, My Team, or AI and suggest the appropriate owner. Flag anything urgent that I may be avoiding. End with a Monday starting plan and the three calendar blocks I should protect. Brain dump: [paste].

HACK
09

Pair AI With a VA to Build Real Leverage

THE PROBLEM

This is where I see many AI strategies break down. The CEO learns the tools, writes every prompt, checks every output, and moves every task forward. The technology may be impressive, but the CEO has simply become the company's highest-paid AI operator.

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT

What I teach is simple: AI still needs a human owner. One capable virtual assistant can run multiple approved AI workflows, verify the output, and return only the decisions that require you. You define the outcome, standard, and guardrails. The VA owns the workflow. AI does the first-pass work.

HOW IT WORKS

Start with one recurring output you should no longer produce personally. Define what good looks like, what AI may do, what the VA must verify, and what requires escalation. Then review a simple weekly dashboard instead of managing every step. If you do not already have the right VA, Hero Nation can help you identify and onboard one for this kind of support.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. Choose one recurring output you should stop producing personally.
2. Define the quality standard, approved AI role, human checks, and escalation rules.
3. Assign a VA to own the workflow and review a weekly completed, pending, and decision-needed report.

COPY / PASTE PROMPT

You are the VA and human owner of this AI-supported workflow. The outcome is [describe]. The quality standard is [describe]. Use our approved AI tools to complete [tasks]. Before sending the result, verify every name, number, date, link, and factual claim. Flag uncertainty instead of hiding it. Deliver the final report in three sections: Completed, Needs My Decision, and Recommended Next Action. Escalate only when the issue requires my judgment, relationship, authority, or approval. Ask for clarification when the standard is unclear.

CEO AI LEVERAGE SCORECARD

Where Is Your Time Still Trapped?

Rate each statement from 1 to 5. A 1 means it rarely drains your time. A 5 means it repeatedly pulls you back into the weeds. Your highest score is the best place to begin.

#	TIME-DRAIN STATEMENT	SCORE
1	My inbox regularly controls my attention and priorities.	1 2 3 4 5
2	Meeting decisions and action items lose momentum after the conversation.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I prepare for important meetings at the last minute.	1 2 3 4 5
4	Content and communication still depend on me starting from a scratch.	1 2 3 4 5
5	I make significant decisions without enough challenge or pressure-testing.	1 2 3 4 5
6	Important processes still live primarily in my head.	1 2 3 4 5
7	Strategic questions remain unanswered because research takes too long.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I start too many weeks reactive, scattered, or unclear on the top priorities.	1 2 3 4 5
9	I personally operate AI tools instead of owning an AI-enabled support system.	1 2 3 4 5

MY HIGHEST-SCORING TIME DRAIN:

THE FIRST WORKFLOW I WILL INSTALL:

IN CLOSING

Own It. Don't Carry It.

None of these nine shifts require you to become a technologist. They require you to stop personally performing work that no longer deserves an executive's time.

Choose the single workflow tied to your highest score. Install it fully. Give it an owner. Define the standard. Once it works without you carrying it, move to the next. If you need help choosing the right workflow, installing the standard, or finding the VA who can own it, that is exactly the kind of work my team and I help leaders do.

READY TO BUILD A BUSINESS THAT CAN HOLD ITS OWN?

If your business still depends on you to make the decisions, solve the problems, and keep everything moving, let's map what only you should own, what your team or VA should carry, and what AI can remove.

NEED THE HUMAN OWNER? Hero Nation can help you identify and onboard a capable VA to run these workflows and protect your time.

BOOK A PRIVATE CONVERSATION:

www.HNStrategySession.com



**SCAN TO
SCHEDULE**

WAYNE SALMANS**Founder, Hero Nation Coaching | Private Advisor to CEOs and Founders**

Wayne Salmans has spent more than 15 years coaching and training over 7,000 entrepreneurs and leaders. He was named to REALTOR Magazine's 30 Under 30, is a Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Alumni, and actively leads three companies. Wayne helps successful founders move from Owner-Operator to Owner by strengthening People, Process, and Profit so the business can grow without requiring them to carry more.

YOU BUILT THE BUSINESS.

NOW LET'S BUILD IT SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY IT.