



# From Uncertainty to Opportunity

A federal leader's companion guide to leading AI adoption — read the signal, cultivate permission, model learning in public.

## THE FRAMEWORK — Three elements that move federal AI adoption

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### Resistance Is Information

*Read the signal, not the surface.*

- ▶ "I don't have time" often means "I don't feel safe."
- ▶ People protect what AI threatens: expertise, predictability, identity.
- ▶ Ask what they're protecting before you ask them to adopt.

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### Readiness Beats Compliance

*Mandates produce theater.  
Permission produces adoption.*

- ▶ Map informal permission structures, not just formal ones.
- ▶ Identify who in your org signals it's okay to try.
- ▶ Willingness can't be mandated. It has to be cultivated.

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### Lead Without All the Answers

*Model learning in public.  
Make uncertainty survivable.*

- ▶ Share what you've tried, what failed, what you're still figuring out.
- ▶ Performed confidence signals it isn't safe for others to be uncertain.
- ▶ Your job isn't to eliminate uncertainty. It's to make it survivable.

## REFLECTION PROMPTS — For working through it on your own team

### WHERE'S YOUR EDGE?

**Who on your team is slow-walking AI adoption — and what expertise or role are they protecting?**

- ▶ What would make it safe for them to try and fail?
- ▶ What signal could you send this week that it's okay to be a beginner?

### WHERE'S THE PERMISSION?

**Who in your organization has informal permission-granting authority — beyond the org chart?**

- ▶ Have they signaled that AI experimentation is legitimate?
- ▶ What would activate them as a permission structure?

## COMMITMENT CARD — One thing I'll try this week

I WILL \_\_\_\_\_

BY \_\_\_\_\_

I'LL KNOW IT WORKED WHEN \_\_\_\_\_

"Your job isn't to eliminate uncertainty — it's to make it survivable."

Adapted from *From Uncertainty to Opportunity*

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