

Agentic work, with your people in view

Village Small Business Course — a briefing

2026

My Digital Sovereignty Ltd

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What this course is

This is a free, self-paced course for a small business deciding what agentic AI means for its work — which work agents should take, and how its people move up rather than out. It does not sell certainty. Different circumstances need different solutions, much is shaped by forces outside your walls, and there are more unknowns on the road ahead than knowns. The aim is to build the judgment to keep deciding well as the ground moves — not a forecast, and not a business case for approval.

Four commitments run through it:

- **People first** — the human question leads; the technology serves it.
- **No false certainty** — different circumstances, different solutions; more unknowns ahead than knowns.
- **Judgment, not a recipe** — methods you run on your own business, not answers handed to you.
- **Questions over answers** — the skill is asking the right question for your situation. There is no model answer; your own situation is the test.

The shift, in brief

A chatbot answers a question. An agent takes an action — it sends, schedules, files, provisions. An action carries consequences a sentence does not, and an action-taker must be held to a higher standard than an answer-giver. The moment a tool can *do* rather than only *say*, the question stops being “is it clever?” and becomes “what will it do, and to whom?”

The first thing most organisations do with AI is the wrong thing: they use it to run their existing processes faster. Speed applied to a flawed process only produces the flaw sooner. And efficiency is the smaller prize. The real value is in **effectiveness** — doing the right work, and doing it better — and in the room AI opens to **innovate**, to offer what you could not offer before. Efficiency tunes the engine; effectiveness and innovation decide whether you are still driving the right vehicle.

There is a reason people come first, and it is technical, not sentimental. Today’s AI is fluent but has no model of your world — it cannot foresee what its action will do to a person. The experienced person in your business already carries that picture: what this client does if the invoice is wrong, the promise

that must never be missed. Until a governed model of your world exists, that person *is* the world model. Remove them, and you remove the only thing that can foresee the harm.

The six modules

Module 1 — What “agentic” really means. Answering is not acting. Why today’s AI cannot foresee the consequences of its actions, and why — for now — the experienced person is the world model it lacks. What to ask of any agentic tool: does it exceed a person at one bounded job, and does it hand back, by rule, everything that should stay human?

Module 2 — Which work is ready, and which stays yours. A five-question method you run over your own work — rule or judgment; reversible; who a mistake lands on; does it need the picture; and the person. Three readings follow — agent, augment, human — with an override: if there is nowhere for the person to go, hold, whatever the other questions say. Most work lands on “augment”.

Module 3 — The human place. The heart of the course. When agents take the routine, the move worth making is to raise people, not remove them. The person who runs a process knows the clients, the service, and where it fails in a way no current AI can match — that knowledge becomes the edge. Plan for the person before you deploy the agent: the order is the ethic.

Module 4 — Pacing the transition. As fast as the work allows, as slow as the people need. Start small and reversible; bring people with you; read the signals that say slow and the ones that say widen. The clock is not wholly yours — the market may move faster than you would choose.

Module 5 — Keeping humans in command. Command is structural, not vigilance. A gate that routes the consequential to a human by a rule the agent cannot route around; a record that answers, later, who decided what and when; a written constitution changed only in the open; and the ground it runs on — whose infrastructure, whose jurisdiction, whose AI.

Module 6 — The new shape. What a small organisation looks like once the routine is agentic and the people have moved up — a thinner layer of routine, people at the edges where judgment and relationships live. The bureaucratic structure is passing; the people are not. The machine models the world; the people remain its authors.

The method: a worksheet

The course turns its central principle into a one-page **Process Triage Worksheet** — the five questions, the three readings, and the override, run across everything your business does. It is a habit, not a one-time sort: mark every reading provisional, and set a date to run it again as the tools and the market move.

Questions by role — not by rank

An agentic transition touches everyone, so the course is read the same by everyone — one spine, no gated tracks. The questions differ by role — direction, stewardship, frontline, and the people doing the work — but the roles are flattening, and in a small business one person often holds several. Transparency is load-bearing, not a courtesy: the method breaks unless those closest to the work feed what they know upward, and those setting direction make their decisions visible.

Held lightly

This is a direction to steer by, not a destination, and not a forecast. The tools will move, the market will turn, and the power Big Tech's AI will exert on your trade is not yet known to anyone. Return to the worksheet, and let the shape of your business follow the work rather than a forecast. The course's gift is not answers to the road, but the judgment to walk it — with your people in view, and the decisions that matter still in human hands.

When you're ready to act

This course is about the judgment. The sovereign ground those judgments can run on — where your records and the AI that reads them answer to your own rules, on infrastructure you control — is the Village. We are also developing tools that build on this course; details are on the course site.

The full course, the worksheet, the five-minute primer, per-module slide decks, and further reading are at mysovereignty.digital/business-course/. Course material © 2026 My Digital Sovereignty Ltd, licensed CC BY 4.0 — share and adapt with attribution.