



MODULE 1

Capability and team readiness

Read where your team's AI capability actually is, and build it on purpose.

- ▶ **The readiness snapshot** *where your team stands*
- ▶ **The capability map** *preserve, develop, or recruit*
- ▶ **Lift the whole team** *not the keen few*

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Free. Five pages, in one sitting.

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Start here, and the gap this closes

Module 0 gave you a governance position. This one is its other half. Governance that only restricts gets routed around; the part that builds capability is what makes the restrictions hold, and what turns AI from a risk you manage into capacity you gain.

Most teams did not decide to adopt AI. It arrived, unevenly. A keen few are fluent, some quietly avoid it, and the quality of what goes out varies depending on who used what. That unevenness is the real readiness problem, and it is invisible until you look at it directly.

Start here

If you do only one thing, do the readiness snapshot below. Five minutes, and it tells you where to focus. Public-sector teams: the same exercises apply; read them against your transparency and FOI obligations too.

In BCG's March 2026 study, 88% of corporate affairs and communications leaders said they were not fully prepared to lead an AI transformation in their function, and only 8% were reinvesting the time and money AI saved them into building new team capabilities. Left alone, the gap widens: the fluent few get more fluent, the rest fall behind, and the function comes to depend on two people rather than a capability it owns.

Boston Consulting Group, (Gen)AI Adoption in Corporate Affairs and Communications, March 2026.



The readiness snapshot

Score your function honestly across five dimensions. For each, give it 1 (red), 2 (amber) or 3 (green). Tick what is true today, not what is planned. The lowest single dimension is usually where to start, not the total.

Dimension	1 (red)	2 (amber)	3 (green)
Spread of use	A keen few only	Patchy across the team	Used purposefully across the team
Skill depth	Mostly mediocre output	Good when someone takes care	Consistently strong, well edited
Governance	No shared red lines	Some know the rules	Whole team knows the red lines (Module 0)
Confidence	Unsure if allowed	Willing but tentative	Confident, clear on what is sanctioned
Pipeline	Juniors lean on AI not craft	Mixed	Juniors building judgement, AI as a tool

- ▶ 12 to 15: a genuine capability. Protect it and keep raising the floor.
- ▶ 8 to 11: a keen-few function. The work is to spread and standardise.
- ▶ 5 to 7: AI is happening to the team, not led by it. Start with permission and red lines, then capability.



The capability map

Decide which capabilities you already hold, which you can develop from what you have, and which you must bring in. The order matters: preserve, then develop, then recruit. Reaching for a hire first is the common, expensive mistake.

Capability	Preserve, develop, recruit?	Note
Editorial and strategic judgement	Usually preserve	Your existing strength. Worth more upstream than down.
AI literacy	Usually develop	Not technical depth. Enough to govern AI and challenge a system decision.
Prompting and workflow craft	Develop	The difference between mediocre and strong output. Teachable, fast.
Reputational risk thinking	Develop or recruit	Mapping where AI use creates trust exposure, before it fails.
Coherence judgement	Preserve and develop	Reading whether everything the organisation says adds up to one story.

- 1 Resist the visible hire, the person who knows the tech. The function needs people who understand AI well enough to govern it and communications well enough to know what that means.
- 2 Induct any technical hire into the discipline. When social media arrived, channel specialists came in and the discipline did not always transfer. Give a real comms induction.
- 3 Protect the junior pipeline. Decide deliberately how junior people still build craft and judgement in an AI-assisted function, or you hollow out your own future.



Lift the whole team, not the keen few

A light, leader-owned plan. Not a course, a rhythm.

- 1 Name a capability owner. One person, in their objectives with dedicated time, not a side project. It can be you. If you cannot name them, that is the first gap to close.
- 2 Surface what the fluent few already do. Capture their best two or three workflows in plain steps. Most teams have real capability sitting undocumented in two people's heads.
- 3 Pick two or three shared workflows to level up together: monitoring summaries, first-draft internal comms, research backgrounders. Improve those together rather than everything at once.
- 4 Run a fortnightly thirty-minute show-and-tell. One thing that worked, one that failed. The failures are the point; honesty about what AI does badly is how a team gets good safely.
- 5 Review in ninety days. Keep what raised quality or saved real time. Drop the rest. Re-score the snapshot.

The one line for your board

“Our team uses AI under a clear governance position, we are building capability deliberately rather than leaving it to a few enthusiasts, and we are protecting how our junior people learn the craft.” Most comms leaders cannot yet say that with evidence behind it. These three tools are how you get the evidence.

This is the capability complement to Module 0's governance, and it draws on Elif Güvençer's “new capability base” in *The Two Clocks* (reputationsignal.co), which sets out why the capability base of the function has to change for the AI era, and in what order.