Facilitator's Guide: The Human at the Helm

A 30-Minute Workshop on the Student's Role in AI-Powered Adult Education

1. Workshop Overview

- **Objective:** By the end of this 30-minute session, participants will be able to define the distinct roles of the instructor and the student in an AI-integrated learning environment, connect AI tool usage to core principles of adult learning and neuroscience, and brainstorm practical, student-led applications for AI.
- **Target Audience:** Adult educators from any discipline, with or without prior AI experience.
- **Core Theme:** Shifting the focus from "What can AI do?" to "What can a student do with AI?" We will frame AI not as a replacement for cognitive work, but as a tool to enhance it, positioning the instructor as the "architect" and the student as the "pilot" of their learning journey.
- **Materials:** Projector (optional), Whiteboard or Flip Chart, Markers, copies of the "Human at the Helm" Participant Worksheet.

2. Workshop Timeline & Talking Points

Part 1: The New Learning Team (5 Minutes)

- **Goal:** Frame the conversation and introduce the core roles.
- **Talking Points:**
  - **(Welcome):** "Welcome. In the next 30 minutes, we're going to explore how AI is changing the landscape of education. But instead of focusing on the technology itself, we're going to focus on the most important element: the human learner."
  - **(Acknowledge Adult Learners):** "As educators of adults, we know our students come to us with experience, a desire for relevance, and a need to be in control of their own learning. AI, when used correctly, can amplify these exact things."
  - **(Introduce the "Learning Triad"):** "We're used to the traditional learning dyad: the instructor and the student. I want to introduce the idea of a 'Learning Triad'. It's the **Instructor**, the **Student**, and the **AI Tool**. Each has a very specific and critical role."
    - **Draw on Whiteboard:** A simple triangle diagram with "Instructor (Architect)", "Student (Pilot)", and "AI (Co-Pilot/Tool)" at the vertices.
  - **(Define Roles Briefly):** "Our role as instructors is shifting. We are the **Architects of Learning**. We design the experience, we frame the essential

questions, we curate the context, and most importantly, we help students make sense of it all. The AI is a powerful **Co-Pilot**, a tool that can generate, explain, and simulate. But the student? The student is the **Pilot**. They are at the controls."

Part 2: The Student as Pilot & The Neuroscience of Active Learning (10 Minutes)

- **Goal:** Connect the student's active role to the science of how people learn effectively.
- **Talking Points:**
  - **(The Problem with Passive Learning):** "For decades, we've known that passively receiving information—just reading or listening—is the least effective way to learn. From a neuroscience perspective, this creates weak neural pathways. To build strong, lasting knowledge, the brain needs to *actively work*."
  - **(Introduce Active Recall):** "This is a concept called **Active Recall**. It's the process of actively retrieving a memory or piece of information. It's the difference between re-reading a chapter and forcing yourself to summarize it without looking. That struggle to remember is what builds the neural connections."
  - **(Connect to AI):** "This is where AI becomes revolutionary for the student. It can serve as a tireless, infinitely patient **Practice Partner**. The student's role is not to ask the AI for the answer to a test. Their role is to command the AI to help them *practice recalling the information themselves*."
  - **(Provide Concrete Examples):**
    - "Instead of asking 'What are the three main causes of the French Revolution?', the student commands the AI: **'Pretend you are a Parisian peasant in 1789. Let me ask you questions about your life so I can figure out the causes of the revolution.'**"
    - "Instead of 'Summarize this article,' the student commands: **'I am going to summarize this article in three sentences. Then, I want you to critique my summary for accuracy and clarity.'**"
    - "This puts the cognitive load—the *desirable difficulty*—back on the student. The AI isn't doing the thinking; it's creating the environment *for* the student to think."
  - **(Sense-Making):** "And our role as the architect is to teach them *how* to do this. To provide them with these kinds of sophisticated prompts and to lead the classroom discussion where we, as humans, make sense of the outputs and challenge the AI's limitations. This is AI Literacy."

Part 3: Activity & Group Discussion (10 Minutes)

- **Goal:** Allow participants to apply the concepts to their own disciplines.
- **Instructions:**
  - "Now it's your turn. I'm handing out a worksheet. Please get into pairs or small groups."
  - "On this sheet, you'll see a section called 'Putting AI to Work'. Your task is to brainstorm at least three specific ways a student in your subject could use an AI as a 'Practice Partner'."
  - "Think about commands a student would give the AI to force them to do the active work. I've included a few starters on the sheet to get you going. You have 5-7 minutes."
  - **(Facilitate):** Walk around, listen to discussions, and offer prompts if groups are stuck.
  - **(Group Share):** "Okay, let's hear some of these ideas. What's one great prompt a student could use in your class?" (Spend 3-4 minutes gathering examples on the whiteboard).

Part 4: Wrap-Up (5 Minutes)

- **Goal:** Summarize the key takeaway and answer questions.
- **Talking Points:**
  - **(Synthesize):** "Look at these amazing ideas. Notice that none of them are about getting the easy answer. They are all about using the tool to create a space for practice, for simulation, for feedback, for active learning."
  - **(Reiterate the Core Message):** "The integration of AI doesn't diminish the role of the student or the instructor; it elevates them. It automates simple information delivery so we can focus on the uniquely human skills: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and sense-making. The goal is not to get the right answer from the machine, but to help our students build the right answers, skills, and understanding in their own minds."
  - "Thank you. What final questions do you have?"