



## THE SECOND BRAIN PLAYBOOK

Part 3 of 4 · the what

# Give it hands.

Skills, tools, output. The brain reaching into your week.

**30** seconds to start · **30** minutes to set up · **30** days to compound

### WHO THIS IS FOR

For the founder who has the brain and wants it working inside the week.

For the operator who wants drafts, prep and follow-ups carried without losing their voice.

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For anyone who wants to see the brain do something real by Tuesday morning.

PART 1 · THE WHY

**Expand your  
mind**

PART 2 · THE HOW

**Build the brain**

PART 3 · THE  
WHAT

**Give it hands**

BONUS · THE LONG  
GAME

**Systems are  
strategy**

**READ THIS WHEN** The brain exists, and you want it working inside your real week.

**How to read this:** About 12 minutes, nothing to install. This part puts the brain to work across one real week. The long game is the bonus, Systems are strategy.

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#### WHERE THIS PLAYBOOK STANDS

**You have the why and the how. This is what it does on a Tuesday.**

**Seven functions. One 20 percent capture each. The brain does the rest  
with you in the loop.**

**30 seconds to start. 30 minutes to set up. 30 days to compound.**

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#### 01 · WHERE WE ARE IN THE TRILOGY

**You have the why and the how. Here is the what.**

What has been missing is what the brain actually does on a normal day, in a business that did not stop running while you read two playbooks. We will fix that now.

If you read *Expand your mind*, you know the strategic choice. If you read *Build the brain*, you know how it works. This is what it does on a Tuesday.

This playbook lands three things. A layer we have not named yet, the mouth. A list of seven functions where a second brain pays you back faster than the rest. And a walk through what a Tuesday morning looks like once the brain is running.

By the end you will know which function in your business has been waiting for this the longest.

## The mouth is where the brain speaks. The hands are where it reaches.

We talked about the brain. We talked about the hands. We did not talk about the third thing.

The hands are the tools the brain reaches for. Gmail, Calendar, Notion, Slack, Granola, Wispr Flow. They act on the world. They send the email, hold the meeting, write the file, ping the team.

The mouth is different. The mouth is where the brain *speaks* into the world. The morning brief that lands in your inbox with the three things that need a decision today. The email drafted in your voice, with your pricing, with the right caveats for that buyer's industry, sitting in your drafts folder waiting for you to hit send. The LinkedIn post that finally sounds like you. The proposal that reads as if you wrote it on the plane, even though you were asleep.

### THE MOUTH

#### Where the brain speaks

The morning brief, the drafts, the summary of yesterday. The visible output you read every morning.

### THE HANDS

#### Where the brain reaches

Gmail, Calendar, Notion, Slack, Granola, Wispr Flow. The tools that act on the world for you.

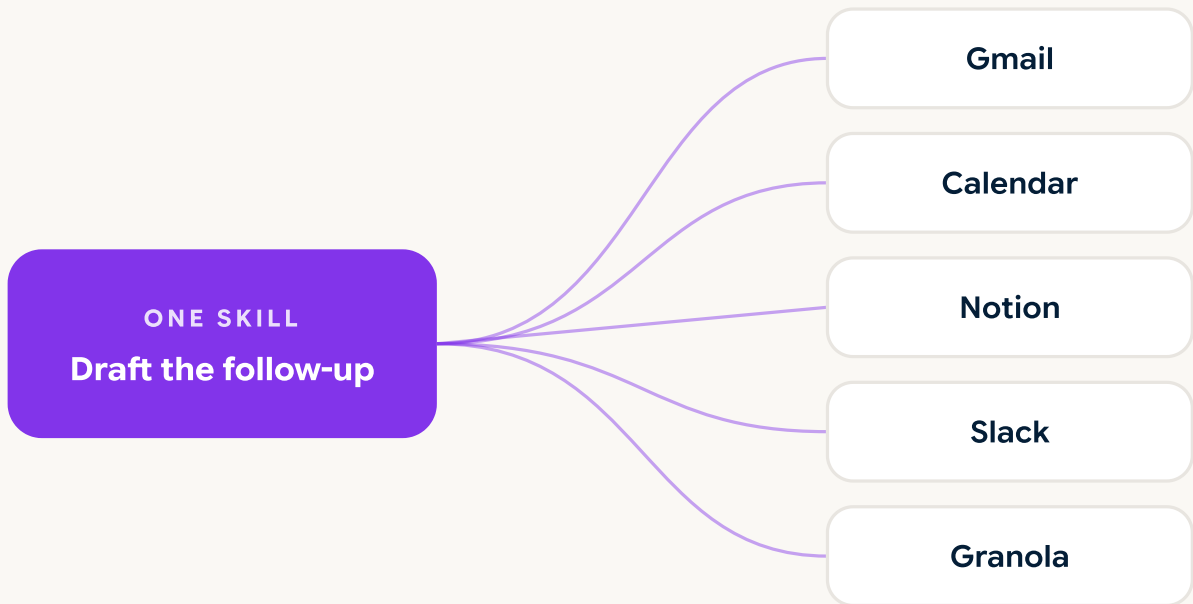
### THE BRAIN

#### Where the work happens

Holds your judgment between sessions. Does the work. The mouth is just where you hear it.

You will notice the mouth before you notice anything else, because the mouth is the part of the brain you read every morning. It is what your team will see first when they start querying the brain instead of querying you.

It matters to name the mouth separately because most founders see one good draft come back from an AI and assume the AI is doing the work. The brain is doing the work. The mouth is just where you hear it. The rest of this playbook is about what the brain actually says, once it has something to say.



One captured skill reaches into every tool. You write the follow-up rule once, and the brain runs it through Gmail, Calendar, Notion, Slack and Granola.

## We ran this for real

We took the same Founder OS brain you would build and dropped it into Hermes, a separate agentic tool that gets tasks done on its own. We did not rebuild the brain. We connected one thing, a Telegram bot, which is the mouth, and ran the whole system from Telegram the way you would text a colleague. The brain stayed exactly as it was. Only the mouth and the hands changed.

That is the proof the brain is portable. It is not trapped inside one app or one company. It is yours, in plain text, and it travels to whatever tool you decide to run it on. The mouth and the hands are swappable. The brain is the part you keep.

## You can build your own window

Talking to the brain in plain language stays the simplest way in. But nothing stops you building your own small window onto the system, shaped the way you think. A glanceable dashboard that shows what the brain is doing right now. The tokens and the model you are spending. What is in context and what has been set aside. The insights it surfaced this week. The line out to your hands, whether that is Hermes or whatever agent tool you run. One screen that is the live pulse of the whole operation.

Build it your way. The rule is simple: the brain and its plain-text pages stay the source of truth, and your window is a read-mostly view on top. You do not move the brain into the dashboard. You point the dashboard at the brain. Keep that line and the connections never break, so you can talk to the AI and watch your own screen at the same time. That is the whole idea in one sentence. Build a system that builds your own systems, then build the window you want to watch it through.



## Seven places where the brain pays you back fastest

There are seven places in a service business where a second brain pays you back faster than anywhere else. None are technical. All of them are functions you already run, mostly in your head, mostly badly.

The work is a 20 percent capture you put in once. The brain holds it. From then on, the brain does the function with you in the loop instead of you doing it alone.

### THE BRIDGE FROM EXISTS TO DOES

## Your judgment lives between sessions.

The next conversation, the next draft, the next decision starts where the last one ended, instead of starting from scratch. That is what this matrix does across seven functions.

FUNCTION	THE 20 PERCENT CAPTURE	THE 80 PERCENT LEVERAGE
<b>Sales</b>	Top 10 buyer objections plus your best reply to each	The next reply writes itself in your voice with the right caveats
<b>Marketing</b>	Voice profile plus 10 stories that always work plus your anti-AI list	Every post sounds like you, not like every other post in the feed
<b>Delivery</b>	Definition of done plus scope guardrails plus escalation rules	Team unblocks itself, scope creep gets named before it lands
<b>Finance</b>	The 5 to 7 numbers you actually read weekly	No more Sunday-night spreadsheet hunting
<b>Hiring</b>	Pattern bank: who lasted, who drifted, what you wish you had asked	Fewer bad hires, faster offboards
<b>Decisions</b>	Decision log with the <i>reasoning</i> , not just the outcome	Stop re-deciding things you already decided
<b>Self</b>	A weekly three-line retro, and a flag when something feels off	Catch burnout 4 weeks earlier than you would have

## Sales

You close better than you think, because you have answered the same ten objections a thousand times. The trouble is the answers live in your head, so a senior on the team cannot use them and every objection comes back to you. Spend one evening writing the ten objections you get most, with the reply you would give to each. From then on the next price pushback gets answered in your voice, with the right caveat for that buyer's industry, by whoever is closest to the deal.

## Marketing

AI-written marketing reads badly mostly because the AI does not know what you sound like or what your audience is searching for. Write down three things, once: your voice profile, the words you use and the words you refuse; your ten stories that always work, the IKEA story, the day you fired yourself, the moment you stopped wearing the hat; your anti-AI list, the words you never want to see under your name. After that, every post sounds like you instead of like every other post in the feed.

## Delivery

Scope creep that nobody named is the most expensive thing in a service business. A team that does not know your definition of done delivers until the client stops asking, and a team that does not know your escalation rules pings you for every small call. Pin down three things: the definition of done for each offer, the guardrails on what is in scope, and the rules for who decides and what counts as a flag versus a fire. Then the team unblocks itself, and scope creep gets named on the call where it appears instead of on the invoice three weeks later.

## Finance

Usually five to seven numbers tell you weekly whether the business is healthy: cash position, pipeline coverage, revenue versus plan, margin trend, days sales outstanding, headcount cost as a share of revenue. The exact set differs per business, and most founders have never written theirs down, so every Sunday night they go hunting through spreadsheets for numbers that should already be in front of them. Write your list once, and the brain pulls them every Monday and shows you the trend before the week starts.

## Hiring

Every founder keeps a pattern bank in their head about who lasts and who drifts. The senior who could not let go of being right. The junior who turned into a leader by month nine. The one you hired for a role you did not actually have. None of it is written down, so the next hire repeats a version of the same mistake. Bank the patterns: the call you made on each past hire, the questions you wish you had asked, the early signs you missed. Your last hire ends up teaching your next one.

## Decisions

The hidden tax in a founder-led business is the decisions you make twice, because you forgot you settled them the first time. The supplier you swore off. The buyer profile you decided not to chase. The pricing question you closed in February and reopened in May because nobody wrote down the reasoning. Log the *why* with every decision, not just the outcome. Six months later, when the same trade-off returns, the brain reminds you what past-you concluded and what has changed since.

## Self

The function you skip first is the one about you, because capturing it feels self-indulgent. A weekly retro, three lines on what shipped and what stalled. A flag every time something feels off. A freshness window that resurfaces what has gone quiet. The brain remembers what you were saying three weeks ago and notices when the pattern has not shifted, which is how it catches burnout four weeks before you would alone.

#### GENERIC AI DRAFT

Hi there, thank you for your email. I wanted to follow up regarding our proposal. Please let me know if you have any questions. Looking forward to hearing from you.

#### AFTER THE BRAIN LOADS YOUR VOICE

Karim, good speaking today. Revised proposal attached, phased so the first 22 seats go live before the finance sign-off, the way we talked it through. The two open questions on payment terms sit on page two, where you will see them. No rush before Thursday.

Same model, same minute. The difference is the brain underneath: your voice, the buyer's name and context, the caveats you always include.

## The matrix is the static view. Here it is in motion.

It is Tuesday. You walk into your office at 8am. You have not opened a tab. You have not read an email. The brief is already on your screen.

1

### Good morning. What is today?

The brain loads the morning brief. It reads your calendar, finds three meetings and a gap from 11am to 1pm, then pulls your flags, stale items, and overdue decisions. The brief lands on screen with the anchor named and the 11am block held.

2

### Draft the follow-up to the engineering buyer.

The brain loads the proposal writer and your voice rules, pulls the buyer context, the last three messages, and the pricing. It knows it is a phased rollout, a Thursday deadline, a 22-person firm. A Gmail draft is ready in your voice, waiting for you to send.

3

### A team lead asks about scope on a mid-tier account.

The brain pulls the definition of done and the scope rules for that tier. The answer surfaces. No founder call needed. The team lead unblocks themselves.

4

### You are thinking about hiring a senior PM.

The brain pulls your last three senior hires, what worked and what did not, and surfaces the pattern with three questions to add to the interview. The decision moves forward without you thinking it through from scratch.

That is one morning. Four functions touched. Two drafts produced. One team unblock. One hiring decision moved forward. None of it required you to remember anything. The brain remembered. The skills loaded. The hands acted.

These moves were possible without a brain. They were just expensive. Each one took 20 minutes of context-switching and re-deciding. Four moves a morning is 80 minutes of friction you no longer carry. Across a year, that is the holiday you have not taken.

● ● ● Morning brief · Tuesday, 8:00

ANCHOR	Prep the 9:00 call with the engineering buyer.
FLAG	Proposal for the 22-person firm is three days stale.
FLAG	Senior PM hire: your call has been owed since Friday.
OVERDUE	The pricing question you reopened in May is still unsettled.
HELD	11:00 to 13:00 blocked for deep work. Do not book over it.

The 8am brief is the mouth of the brain. You read the state of the business before you open a single tab.

The brief that lands at 8am is the mouth. The Gmail draft is a hand reaching for a tool. The hiring pattern that surfaced is the brain pulling memory you wrote down six months ago. Same system, showing up three different ways inside one morning.

## So why do I still need people?

A question that comes up the moment anyone sees the brain working. Or the other version: why do I still need an AI if I have good people?

Both questions assume the AI and the person are doing the same job. They each do part of the job, and they each fail in characteristic ways.

### AI AGENT

- Reads context fast
- Drafts at scale
- Never tired, never bored
- Holds long memory across sessions
- Costs predictable
- Fails when context is missing, stakes are high and reversible only with an apology, or the situation has never happened before

### HUMAN EMPLOYEE

- Reads a room
- Judges new situations
- Owns relationships
- Sees what is not on the page
- Carries the brand into the world
- Fails when asked to remember everything, draft from scratch all day, or be consistent across 200 conversations

The AI agent is good at the things humans burn out doing. The human is good at the things AI cannot see. The brain in the middle is what connects them, because it holds the context the AI needs and the patterns the human team can query.

Most teams I see fail one of two ways. They hire a human to do work the AI should be doing, drafting the same email thirty times a week, and the human burns out. Or they buy an AI to do work a human should be doing, closing a strategic deal, and the deal goes nowhere. The brain is what makes sure neither of those happens.

**Ask which part of what your assistant does the brain should carry, so they get back to the work you actually hired them for. That is the question that pays.**

## The brain is not magic. Here is how it fails, and the fix.

It is a system, and systems can fail. Here are the six ways it goes wrong, with the fix for each. None of these are guesses. They are mistakes I have made or watched founders make.

**FAILURE MODE****THE FIX**

**The brain becomes a graveyard**

You captured a lot in week one, never went back, and now it is dead text nobody trusts. The fix is the weekly retro. Thirty minutes every Friday. Read what is current, decay what is not, mark what should be promoted to a permanent pattern. The brain dies without the retro.

**You over-capture and lose signal**

Everything goes in. Nothing is more important than anything else. The brain is full and useless. The fix is the decay window. Every entry has a freshness date. Things nobody touches for 14 days surface for a keep-or-kill review. Forgetting is the brain's job as much as remembering.

**You hand it to the team too early**

You told the team "ask the brain first" and it answered three questions wrong because the substrate was too thin. Trust was lost. The fix is to run the brain yourself for the first four weeks. Watch what it gets right. Fix what it gets wrong. Only then invite the team in.

**You confuse the brain with a chatbot**

You start asking it general questions and the output is generic because you are using it like a public AI. The fix is to remember the brain only matters when it is loading your substrate. If you are not asking about your business, your decisions, your team, or your week, open a normal chat instead.

**The mouth runs ahead of the brain**

The drafts read beautifully, but the team starts sending them without reading them. Bad emails go out in your voice. The fix is the pre-ship gate. Every draft that leaves your machine passes a voice check, a truth check, and a contact-info check. The mouth is fast. The gate is what makes fast safe.

**You install everything at once**

Week one you tried to capture all seven functions and burned out. The brain has half-formed substrate everywhere and a complete one nowhere. The fix is to start with the function where the pain is loudest, get that one working, then add the next. The brain pays you back one function at a time, never seven at once.

## The same arc as **Expand your mind, told from the inside.**

What surviving looks like is something you already know. What thriving looks like is harder to describe until you have lived it, but here is the shape.

### Month 1

You stop re-deciding. The first time the brain reminds you what you already concluded about a buyer profile, you feel the difference. It feels like finding a notebook you forgot you kept. Small, quiet. The queue in your head gets shorter by maybe 10 percent. The first skill loads, usually the proposal writer or the email drafter. You start to trust the output enough to send a draft without rewriting half of it.

### Month 3

The first team member queries the brain instead of querying you. They get the answer in 20 seconds. You get a ping that says "found it, thanks". You sit with that for a moment, because for the first time in a long time, you were not needed for a thing that used to need you. Then you go back to work. The relief is bigger than the moment, and you do not really notice it yet.

### Month 6

The brain has held you through one bad quarter and one good one. The bad quarter is where the brain proves itself. It remembers what worked the last time the pipeline got soft, and the team can pull that history without you re-explaining the playbook. The senior hire you brought in three months ago is still there because the brain held the onboarding context nobody had written down before. You start to plan a week off. The thought does not feel reckless anymore.

### Month 12

A year in, you leave for two weeks. You actually leave. The team runs the business without you. Your spouse asks why you have been around more. You take a beat before answering because you are no longer sure how to describe what changed. The honest answer is that the brain caught up with you, and the work stopped feeling like dragging the business uphill. You stopped wearing hats that were never yours. You stopped confusing exhaustion with importance. The business does not need you to be the bottleneck anymore. It needs you to be the founder, which is a different job, and you have time for it for the first time since you started.

That is the arc. Twelve months is the realistic horizon. Less than that and you are still building substrate. More than that and you should be running on it, not still installing it.

## You have the trilogy. The bundle is below.

Install it yourself, or spend 30 minutes with us on your real business.

### Do it yourself - free

The scaffold is free. The skills are free. The playbook you are reading is free. Grab the Founder OS repo, follow the README, and you are running by the end of an evening. Pick one function from the matrix above. Capture the 20 percent for that function this week. The first month is substrate work. The pay-back starts after that.

[Get the free Founder OS repo →](#)

### Create your second brain with us

Book a free 30-minute call. We spend the time on your business, not pitching. The brain answers your real questions in front of you, so you see how it behaves before you commit to anything. Walk away with one useful answer and nothing owed, and the call was worth your time.

[Book a free 30-minute call →](#)

**If you want the business-level view.** The 32-chapter business playbook is the company-layer companion to this trilogy. It maps where the brain fits inside a service business that is trying to grow past the founder. [Read the business playbook](#)

GIVE YOUR BRAIN HANDS

## Pick one function. Capture the 20 percent. Watch the brain do the rest.

Build it yourself with the free repo, or bring your real business to a free 30-minute call and watch the brain answer your questions before you commit. If it does not earn the next conversation, we walk. We give it away so you can build a system that builds your own systems.

[Book a free 30-minute call](#)

[Message us on WhatsApp](#)

[Or build it yourself, free →](#)



**Processes fail people.**