



AI Intermediary: How to Cut Fluff and Make Expertise Usable

The web spent years sifting fluff to find a clean thread. You typed, they ranked, and you skimmed. Now the question moves to the front of the line, and AI meets it with your prompt, in your language, at your moment.

The mediator fades. The expert's hard-won meaning compresses, and AI serves as an intermediary that translates condensed intent to match the observer's question in real time. That's the new exchange on the far side of search. It's also the new risk: without discipline, we trade old fluff for synthetic gloss and call it progress. The work now is small, sane systems that preserve intent while matching context, the quiet craft of cause over noise, not the loud claim.

A solo tax attorney tested this in practice during a live client call. She asked a model to restate a complex IRS clause in plain steps for a first-time filer. The client followed the steps and filed the correct form without a follow-up call. No agency, no translator, just intent, clarified.

“An AI intermediary is a system that translates an expert's condensed intent into a context-matched answer at the moment of the observer's question. It reduces reliance on search filtering and human go-betweens by compressing expertise, clarifying assumptions, and adjusting detail level in real time for the person asking.”

Define the AI intermediary

A quick scene: a facilities manager messages, “How do I evaluate heat pumps for a 10-unit building?” The old path was ten tabs and a guess. The new path asks AI to restate the question, surface missing constraints, and map an expert's guidance to the manager's next decision.

This is where signal vs noise on the far side of complexity shows up: the same knowledge, but fitted to the next action, not the next click. An intermediary



mediates between expert and observer. The observer seeks an answer for a present task. Expert's condensed intent is the distilled, portable core of know-how. Fluff is inauthentic, low-value content that distracts from doing. Signal vs noise separates what causes progress from what merely sounds like it.

Rapid testing frameworks

A founder once told me, “We don't need more content; we need fewer dead ends.” Exactly. You don't scale answers, you scale verification. Two lightweight frameworks help.

The Core Alignment Model (CAM) serves as scaffolding to keep answers aligned to who you serve, what outcome matters, and what constraints bind you. Define the ask by having the model restate who the observer is, what outcome they need, and what constraint applies. Require assumptions by asking for a list of assumptions and risks before answer generation. Fit the altitude by requesting three versions: overview, operator steps, and edge cases. A compliance lead used CAM prompts to prepare a privacy FAQ for front-line staff. After adding constraints for region and data types, help tickets dropped the next week because answers matched actual scenarios.

The strategic clarity loop strengthens the faint signal through reversible experiments. Run micro-pilots by testing an answer with one real observer before publishing. Maintain traceability by asking the model to show its reasoning path. Practice signal discipline by archiving prompts, outputs, and decisions. A clinic drafted a patient explainer for a new policy, tested it at the front desk for a day, and edited phrasing that caused hesitations. The final version stuck because it was proved in practice.

“Expertise isn't a speech; it's a fit. The value isn't eloquence; it's transfer. We honor the craft by making it easier to do the next right thing.”

Design experiments over certainty

When in doubt, test a thinner slice. Shorter loops, cleaner cause. A prompt clarity pass asks the model to restate your question and list missing details. Provide the missing pieces, then proceed. A product manager added “user role” and “device”



after the pass, and the help copy stopped confusing admins with end-users.

Intent compression review feeds expert notes to the model and asks for a one-page brief with assumptions and a glossary. Have the expert mark corrections. A safety engineer reviewed the brief, fixed two terms, and approved it for technician handbooks the same day.

Answer altitude control requests three levels: executive summary, operator checklist, and edge-case appendix. Reader selection patterns inform the default level for future answers. Most field reps pick the checklist; leadership prefers the summary in weekly notes.

Ethics and context checks ask what could go wrong if someone acted on this and where this might not apply. A marketing team dropped a claim after the check surfaced a regulatory nuance for a specific region.

Decision making under uncertainty

Three slices from the field, each small and reversible. A B2B team used AI to tailor a single paragraph in proposals to the buyer's role. They logged which paragraph versions led to faster meeting acceptance and kept the variants that cut back-and-forth emails. A library wrote a “first-time passport” guide with AI, then watched patrons at the desk. Questions about photo requirements kept popping up, so they bumped that step to the top. Confusion waned, and staff time freed up. A plant lead asked for “three fast checks” when a machine alarm triggered. He laminated the checklist and placed it at the station. False alarms stopped escalating to maintenance unless the third check failed.

Each case turned an expert pattern into a real decision, faster than a search session and safer than a guess.

Handle objections and failures

Won't AI distort nuance? Keep an expert-in-the-loop for high-risk content and require reasoning traces. Reviewers spot brittle leaps early. Isn't this just new fluff? Log prompts, answers, and outcomes. Retire prompts that don't lead to task completion. What about lost curation and ethics? Add a standing “assumptions and risks” pass and escalation rules. Does this flatten expertise into shallow takes?



Control altitude and provide appendices. Let novices act now and experts dive deeper.

Return to the signal

We started with filtered noise and ended with fitted meaning. The strategic shift is simple to say and hard to do: move from search-and-skim to test-and-trace on the far side of complexity. Use an AI intermediary to carry expert intent without losing the thread. Let outcomes, not eloquence, decide what survives contact with reality.

Here's something you can tackle right now:

Ask your AI: “Restate my question and list missing details before answering.” Provide the missing pieces, then proceed. Track how many iterations drop over time.