

# AI Hackathon Playbook



AI Hackathon is a time-boxed event where teams prototype solutions using AI to prove value quickly with demos (not production-ready systems).

## Examples of what it can include

### AI-enabled workflows

automations, copilots, intake flows

01

### Prototype tools

Apps/dashboards/assistants

02

### Reusable assets

Prompt packs, custom GPTs, AI agents

03

## How to run a successful AI hackathon

### STEP 1



#### Define the purpose

Set a clear goal for what success looks like. AIHR paired the hackathon with a kickoff event and updated enablement materials.

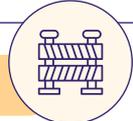
### STEP 2



#### Choose your scope and challenge tracks

Pick tracks or keep it open, but require AI in the build or solution. We kept the problem space open with that requirement.

### STEP 3



#### Set guardrails early

Clarify data/tool rules and access upfront. AIHR reshared the AI policy and supported tool access with lightweight procurement.

### STEP 6



#### Build enablement into the event

Provide fast support and starter resources during the build. We set up a help desk channel and shared an AI starter pack/resources.

### STEP 5



#### Define the “minimum viable prototype”

Define what teams must demo so they build, not just plan. AIHR aimed for demos and ran a dozen projects through to demo stage.

### STEP 4



#### Make team formation a real process

Create a short window for pitching and forming teams before build day. We used Slack and a spreadsheet in the week after kickoff.

### STEP 7



#### Use judging criteria that reward usefulness

Judge on practical value, not just novelty. AIHR scored teams on Impact, Innovation, and Proof of Concept.

### STEP 8



#### Make demo day a moment

Make demos visible and structured to build energy. We had teams present to a panel of judges after the kickoff-led ramp-up.

### STEP 9



#### Plan follow-through before the hackathon starts

Decide upfront how projects will be shortlisted, resourced, and communicated over the next 30 days



### HR TIP

The best hackathons end with outcomes people can copy next week, not ideas that sound good in a slide deck.

## Should your AI hackathon be company-wide or function-led?

### Company-wide

Works well in smaller orgs to build cross-functional teams and shared momentum.



### Function-led

Works well in larger orgs as it's easier to run and govern, while still involving partners (IT, Security, Legal, Comms) as mentors, judges, or team members.

