

2026 FPDA + ISD INDUSTRY SUMMIT

BEYOND *the* PROMPT

**CONVERSATIONS EVERY LEADER
SHOULD HAVE WITH AI**

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Jena Dunham

Marketing leader. Agency executive. Salesperson.
Professional asker of "*But why?*"

- **20+ years in marketing & creative strategy**
- **VP, Marketing & Creative Services at Etherio**
- **AI assistant: used daily, trusted selectively**

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“...What I appreciate most about Jena is her no-nonsense approach to business. She’s the one in the meeting asking the hard questions. If a plan survives her cross-examination, you have a winner.”



Rob Maxwell
Creative Director
Etherio

I don't trust AI. • Quite the contrary.

**I use AI because
it has genuinely
made me a more
effective leader.**

**AI cannot
replace your
expertise.**

AI excels at:

- generating variations and alternatives
- scaling ideas
- combining ideas in unexpected ways
- rapid prototyping

Humans excel at:

- judgement and taste
- emotional resonance
- context, intentionality, and purpose

“The most valuable skill in the AI age is fast becoming...taste.”



Daniel Pink
Author, Speaker, Writer

“When making was expensive, making was the scarce skill. Now making is nearly free, so judgement is scarce.”



Daniel Pink
Author, Speaker, Writer

“A world of more stuff is inevitably a world of more bad stuff. And *taste* – aesthetic judgement, a point of view – that’s the antidote.”



Daniel Pink
Author, Speaker, Writer

Hallucinations

Workshop

Ethics

Plagiarism

Overreliance

**And none of this is a reason not to use AI.
It's a reason to use it like a leader.**

**We've been
asking AI to
help us with
the basics.**

Draft this email.

Create this presentation.

Summarize this report.

Useful? Absolutely!

**But not exactly
transformational.**

Myth

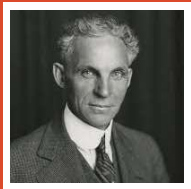
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**The better you
get at using AI,
the less you
have to think.**

The Truth for Leaders:

**The better you get
at using AI, the
better you should
be thinking.**

**“If I had asked people what they wanted,
they would have said faster horses.”**



Henry Ford (maybe)
Inventor, Industrialist, a Jerk
Ford Motor Company

The Reframe:

**What if the best
prompt is the one that
proves you wrong?**

**My most valuable AI conversations
almost never start with...**

"Write..."

"Create..."

"Summarize..."

They start with questions.

**What am I
missing?**

**What assumptions am I
making?**

What's the strongest argument against this?

What would my CEO question?

Where would someone get confused?

How can we best measure the success?

**What data would change my
mind?**

If I had to cut 20%, what do I protect?

What is the 10x version of this idea?

What do you need from me to provide more insight?

CHALLENGE WHAT I THINK I KNOW

**Sales have been flat
for six months.**

What's the problem?

Marketing

The Sales Team

Pricing

Our Competition

The Economy

What if none of those is the core problem?

**What are we assuming is causing flat sales
that the data may not actually support?**

**If marketing, pricing, competition, and the economy aren't the problem,
what would you investigate next?**

What evidence would prove our current explanation wrong?

Sometimes the most valuable thing AI can do is challenge the premise of your original question.

CHALLENGE WHAT I THINK I KNOW

**We have to cut 20% from
next year's budget.**

What do we protect?

Your AI assistant may recommend you cut X, Y, and Z.

Then you ask...

Make the strongest case that we're making the wrong decision.

Who inside the organization is most likely to disagree, and why?

What domino effects might we be overlooking?

What are we protecting because it's effective, and what are we protecting because it's familiar?

**Don't ask AI to make the decision.
Make your decision easier to defend.**

CHALLENGE WHAT I THINK I KNOW

**Customers can't tell us
apart from our competitors.**

Why should they choose us?

They all say:

Innovative solutions...

Unmatched service...

Trusted partner...

Industry-leading expert...

Can you explain why someone should choose us without saying we're "better"?

What are we willing NOT to be?

What do we emphasize too much or care about that our customers probably don't?

What does everyone in our category say that has essentially become meaningless?

**Don't ask AI to make you sound different.
Use it to help you find what actually makes you different.**

THE BETTER CONVERSATION

THE PAST

AI gives me answers.

AI can tell me what to do.

AI can write my message.

AI helps me be more creative.

AI can interpret my data.

THE FUTURE FOR LEADERS

Challenge what I think I know.

Pressure-test my decision.

Help me find what's worth saying.

Push me beyond my first idea.

Help me find questions inside the data.

AI doesn't have original thought,
and it's designed by default to flatter you
and bolster your ego.

It is not designed to challenge you.

Your job as a leader is to make it
an unwilling accomplice.

**Let's
talk!**



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