FAST-15 Reading List: AI Foundations for Every Employee

Provider: 7formations | Course: FAST-15 | Instructor: Wadood Chaudhary | Links verified October 29, 2026

Plain-language readings for employees with no technical background. Survey figures are dated, because AI adoption numbers change every few months; quote them with their date.

Suggested reading: the source book

Svekis, Laurence Lars. *AI Literacy for All Employees: Understanding the Role of Artificial Intelligence in the Modern Workplace*. Kindle edition, published February 25, 2026. 15 chapters plus an appendix quick-reference guide.

This course is built on chapters 1 to 5 of Laurence Lars Svekis's book and is presented by Wadood Chaudhary for 7formations. All course materials are written in our own words; the book is recommended reading, not a script. Read the mapped chapters before or right after each session. Where the book and 2026 sources differ, the course follows the dated sources listed below and says so.

Session	Book chapters (Svekis, 2026)	What this course adds
Session 1	1. The AI Moment; 2. How Artificial Intelligence Works	Adds 2026 adoption data, the three families of business AI, and how generative models learn (self-supervised pretraining) in plain words
Session 2	3. AI in Everyday Work; 4. AI Myths and Misconceptions	Adds built-in AI in common Massachusetts SMB tools and updates the book's myth 6 (workplace models are not retrained in real time) with 2026 memory and data-training settings
Session 3	5. How Employees Use AI Today	Adds research evidence (NBER customer support study, HBS jagged-frontier study), the assistance ladder, and AI agents

The book is listed as a required reading in each session below, with the companion AI Literacy Studio site as optional practice.

How to use. Required readings take 20 to 45 minutes per session and are done before (or right after) the session they support. Optional readings go deeper. 'Living page' means the publisher updates it continuously; read the current version. Reading times are estimates for the parts that matter to this course, not the whole document.

Session 1: What AI is and how it learns

Required

- **Laurence Lars Svekis, AI Literacy for All Employees: Understanding the Role of Artificial Intelligence in the Modern Workplace (book)**
  Publisher: Laurence Lars Svekis (author); Kindle edition sold on Amazon | Date: Published February 25, 2026 | Reading time: about 50 min
  URL: https://www.amazon.com/Literacy-All-Employees-Understanding-Intelligence-ebook/dp/B0GQ1LDHGH
  Why read: Chapters 1 (The AI Moment) and 2 (How Artificial Intelligence Works): the book's plain-language account of why AI matters now and how systems learn from data.

- **What is Machine Learning?**
  Publisher: Amazon Web Services | Date: Living page | Reading time: about 15 min
  URL: https://aws.amazon.com/what-is/machine-learning/
  Why read: A short vendor-neutral explainer of supervised, unsupervised, and reinforcement learning, matching the Lab 1 sort.

Optional

- **What is Generative AI?**
  Publisher: Amazon Web Services | Date: Living page | Reading time: about 15 min
  URL: https://aws.amazon.com/what-is/generative-ai/
  Why read: How generative AI differs from earlier machine learning.
- **The 2026 AI Index Report**
  Publisher: Stanford Institute for Human-Centered AI (HAI) | Date: April 2026 | Reading time: about 20 min
  URL: https://hai.stanford.edu/ai-index/2026-ai-index-report
  Why read: Read the top takeaways only: the 2026 snapshot of capability, cost, and adoption.
- **Training and Employment Notice 07-25: The U.S. Department of Labor's Artificial Intelligence Literacy Framework**
  Publisher: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration | Date: February 13, 2026 | Reading time: about 15 min
  URL: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-07-25
  Why read: The federal AI literacy framework this course maps to.

Session 2: AI in everyday work and the myths around it

Required

- **Laurence Lars Svekis, AI Literacy for All Employees: Understanding the Role of Artificial Intelligence in the Modern Workplace (book)**
  Publisher: Laurence Lars Svekis (author); Kindle edition sold on Amazon | Date: Published February 25, 2026 | Reading time: about 45 min
  URL: https://www.amazon.com/Literacy-All-Employees-Understanding-Intelligence-ebook/dp/B0GQ1LDHGH
  Why read: Chapters 3 (AI in Everyday Work) and 4 (AI Myths and Misconceptions).
- **Memory in ChatGPT**
  Publisher: OpenAI Help Center | Date: Living page | Reading time: about 10 min
  URL: https://help.openai.com/en/articles/8590148-memory-in-chatgpt
  Why read: How memory works in one popular assistant and how to manage it. Use it to update the myth that assistants never remember anything.
- **How your data is used to improve model performance**
  Publisher: OpenAI Help Center | Date: Living page | Reading time: about 10 min
  URL: https://help.openai.com/en/articles/5722486-how-your-data-is-used-to-improve-model-performance
  Why read: When chats can and cannot be used to improve models, by plan type.

Optional

- **Why language models hallucinate**
  Publisher: OpenAI | Date: September 5, 2025 | Reading time: about 15 min
  URL: https://openai.com/index/why-language-models-hallucinate/
  Why read: Why language models produce confident errors.
- **Americans and AI 2026: Chatbots, Smart Devices and Views on Impact**
  Publisher: Pew Research Center | Date: June 17, 2026 (survey conducted February 17 to 23, 2026) | Reading time: about 15 min
  URL: https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2026/06/17/americans-and-ai-2026-chatbots-smart-devices-and-views-on-impact/
  Why read: How many Americans use chatbots in 2026, including 38% of employed adults for work tasks.

Session 3: How employees use AI today and where people decide

Required

- **Laurence Lars Svekis, AI Literacy for All Employees: Understanding the Role of Artificial Intelligence in the Modern Workplace (book)**
  Publisher: Laurence Lars Svekis (author); Kindle edition sold on Amazon | Date: Published February 25, 2026 | Reading time: about 25 min
  URL: https://www.amazon.com/Literacy-All-Employees-Understanding-Intelligence-ebook/dp/B0GQ1LDHGH
  Why read: Chapter 5 (How Employees Use AI Today).
- **About 1 in 5 U.S. workers now use AI in their job, up since last year**
  Publisher: Pew Research Center | Date: October 6, 2025 | Reading time: about 10 min
  URL: https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/10/06/about-1-in-5-us-workers-now-use-ai-in-their-job-up-since-last-year/
  Why read: About one in five U.S. workers said in 2025 that some of their work is done with AI.

Optional

- **Navigating the Jagged Technological Frontier (Dell'Acqua et al.), HBS Working Paper 24-013**
  Publisher: Harvard Business School | Date: September 2023 | Reading time: about 20 min
  URL: https://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Pages/item.aspx?num=64700
  Why read: The 'jagged frontier' study: AI helped on some consultant tasks and hurt accuracy on others. Read the abstract and introduction.
- **Generative AI at Work (Brynjolfsson, Li, and Raymond), NBER Working Paper 31161**
  Publisher: National Bureau of Economic Research | Date: April 2023 (revised) | Reading time: about 20 min
  URL: https://www.nber.org/papers/w31161
  Why read: A customer-support study: on average 14% more issues resolved per hour, with the largest gains for newer agents.
- **2026 Work Trend Index Annual Report: Agents, human agency and the opportunity for every organization**
  Publisher: Microsoft | Date: May 5, 2026 | Reading time: about 15 min

URL: https://news.microsoft.com/annual-work-trend-index-2026/
Why read: Microsoft's 2026 view of agents and how work is changing. A vendor report, so read it critically.

- **AI Literacy Studio (companion site to the book)**
  Publisher: Laurence Lars Svekis, DiscoveryVIP | Date: Living page | Reading time: about 15 min
  URL: https://discoveryvip.com/ai-literacy-studio/
  Why read: The book's companion site, with practice material.

Link verification

Every URL above was checked on October 29, 2026 with an HTTP request (status 200 after redirects) or, where the publisher's site blocks automated requests (mass.gov, dol.gov, hhs.gov, cdc.gov, openai.com), by loading the page and confirming its title and content. Links that returned 404 during checking were dropped and are not listed. The instructor re-checks links before each cohort.