



CHECKLIST

The SMB AI Use Policy Checklist

Practical Guardrails to Protect
Your Business Without Slowing
Your Team Down

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AI Is Already at Work—With or Without a Policy

AI has quietly become part of everyday work, from drafting emails to knocking out busywork faster. In most SMBs, teams are already using it, whether clear rules exist or not.

That's where things get risky. A good AI use policy isn't about fear, red tape, or slowing innovation. It's about clarity. This checklist helps you **build practical, common-sense guardrails** so your team knows what's encouraged, what's off-limits, and how to use AI with confidence, without putting your business at risk.

#1

Approved vs. Unapproved AI Tools

So employees don't have to guess or Google their way into trouble.

- Clearly list approved AI tools for business use
- Specify which AI tools are not allowed with company data
- Define how employees can request approval for new tools
- Assign ownership for approving or denying tool requests

Why it matters: This eliminates shadow IT while giving employees a clear, safe path to smarter tools that boost productivity.

#2

Data Security & Confidential Information

Because once data goes into an AI tool, you may not get it back.

- Define what data should never be entered into AI tools (Personally Identifiable Information (PII), financial information, proprietary information, etc.)
- Set rules for handling sensitive, regulated, or proprietary data
- Include expectations for anonymization or data masking
- Require review and validation of AI-generated outputs

Simple rule to include: "If you wouldn't share it publicly, don't put it into an AI prompt."

#3

Acceptable Use & Employee Responsibilities

AI can assist, but accountability still belongs to humans.

- Require human review before AI outputs are used or shared
- Reinforce employee responsibility for accuracy and tone
- Prohibit AI use to bypass controls or approval processes
- Set expectations for ethical and non-discriminatory use

Why it matters: AI should support your team's work, not replace judgment, ownership, or values.

#4

Compliance, Privacy & Risk Considerations

AI doesn't exist in isolation, and neither does your policy.

- Align AI usage with existing compliance requirements (HIPAA, finance, CMMC, etc.)
- Address applicable data privacy laws and contractual obligations
- Tie AI use back to existing security and acceptable use policies
- Account for risk management, audits, and documentation needs

Bottom line: Your AI policy should *strengthen* compliance, not quietly undermine it.

#5

Training, Awareness & Policy Updates

A policy only works if people understand it and revisit it.

- Require basic AI awareness or usage training for employees
- Empower IT or leadership to evolve the policy as tools and risks change
- Document how often the AI policy will be reviewed and updated
- Establish a clear process for employees to ask questions or report AI-related concerns

Why it matters: The most effective AI policies are living documents, not forgotten PDFs.

#6

Ownership & Accountability

Someone needs to own AI, not everyone, not no one.

- Define who owns the AI use policy (IT, security, leadership, or a committee)
- Clarify who approves tools, updates rules, and resolves questions
- Document escalation paths for AI-related issues or concerns

Why it matters: When everyone owns AI, no one does. Clear ownership keeps decisions moving and risk contained.

#7

Third-Party & Vendor AI Usage

Your data doesn't stop being your responsibility once a vendor touches it.

- Require disclosure when vendors use AI with your data
- Set expectations for how vendors store, retain, or train on data
- Align AI expectations with vendor contracts and SLAs
- Define approval requirements for AI-enabled services

Bottom line: Plenty of AI risk enters through vendors, not just employees.

#8

Human Oversight & Decision Boundaries

Let AI suggest. Let humans decide.

- Explicitly prohibit AI from making final decisions in sensitive areas (HR, finance, legal, etc.)
- Require human approval for AI-assisted decisions that affect people or money
- Define when AI can assist vs. when it cannot be used at all

Why it matters: This protects against over-automation and uncomfortable “the AI told us to” moments.

#9

Incident Response & Planning

Mistakes happen. Silence makes them worse.

- Define how employees should report AI misuse or data exposure
- Include AI-specific steps in your incident response plan
- Reinforce a “report early, no blame” mindset

Why it matters: Fast reporting limits damage and builds trust, especially when AI is involved.

#10

Brand, Reputation & External Use

AI can speak fast. That doesn't mean it speaks for you.

- Set rules for AI-generated external communications (marketing, social, customer responses)
- Require brand, tone, and accuracy checks before publishing
- Clarify whether AI-generated content needs disclosure

Why it matters: AI output reflects your brand, whether you intended it to or not.



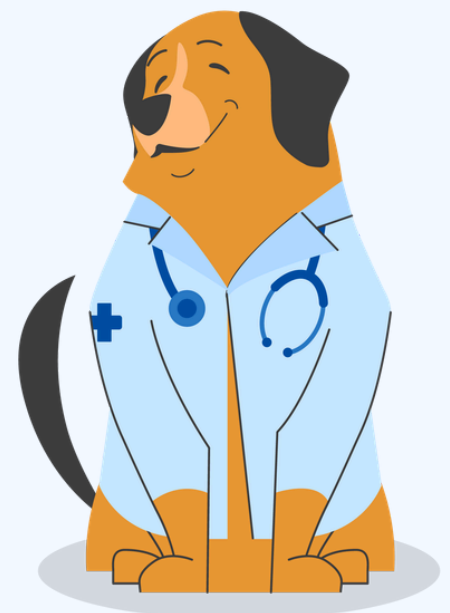
Final Gut Check

Before rolling out your AI use policy, ask:

- Is this clear to non-technical employees?
- Does it guide behavior without killing innovation?
- Can our team confidently use AI and stay protected?

If the answer isn't “yes” across the board, it's time to refine.

And our [team of experts](#) can help you and your business do just that...



Want Help Getting This Right?

Mirazon works with SMBs every day to put practical guardrails around fast-moving technology like AI, without slowing teams down or shutting innovation off. We help you strike the balance between protecting your data, staying compliant, and giving your employees the **confidence to use AI the right way**.

If you're ready to build an AI use policy that actually works in the real world—not one that collects dust or creates confusion—we're here to help. Let's create something your team will understand, follow, and trust. [Contact our experts today](#) to get started!

[Contact Us](#)

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