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The Coherence Problem

Why Skills Are the New Language of AI

EXECUTIVE THESIS

Enterprise AI will not compound while systems, workflows, intelligence, and decisions remain fragmented. Skills are the translation layer that turns experience into coherent AI capability.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

01

AI can isolate. Tools added to fragmented work often create more fragmentation.

02

Skills create coherence. They encode how the business problem should be understood.

03

Brains compound. Memory, evidence, decisions, and skills improve future work.

AVIS AI Leadership Brief

The real AI problem is coherence, not model access.

Enterprises today do not suffer only from a shortage of AI tools. They suffer from a coherence problem: systems fragment, intelligence sits in silos, workflows disconnect, AI isolates, and decisions misalign.

When AI is deployed into this environment as another tool, it can make the problem worse. It may produce impressive local output, but it does not necessarily connect the operating context, business judgment, workflow logic, evidence, ownership, and decision rhythm of the enterprise.

Core argument

The intelligent enterprise is built when experience is translated into reusable skills, and those skills are connected to memory, evidence, decisions, and action.

This brief is written from the perspective of an AI professional and technology leader with four decades of enterprise leadership experience, including hands-on work building specific agents, testing platforms and local models, and creating reusable skills for architecture, engineering, client intelligence, research, and delivery.

The maturity path

Fragment	Skill	AI Brain
AI helps locally but starts from incomplete context.	Domain judgment becomes a reusable way of working.	Memory, evidence, context, and action compound.

What changes for leaders

From tools	Choosing models and platforms is not enough.
To coherence	Leaders must design how AI connects work, knowledge, decisions, and accountability.
From prompts	One interaction may produce good output.
To skills	Repeated expertise becomes reusable enterprise intelligence.

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From experience to skills

FIELD LESSON

The model matters. The skill layer determines whether AI understands the work.

WHAT CHANGED

The work moved from asking AI for answers to teaching AI how recurring business problems should be handled.

WHY IT MATTERS

Without skills, every agent remains a smart generalist. With skills, each agent can become a trained domain specialist.

Months of agent work changed what mattered.

The starting questions were familiar: which model, which platform, which agent runtime, which local model? Those questions matter, but after months of building specific agents, the sharper question became: how does the system learn the business?

A skill is not only a technical skill

In an AI brain, a skill is a reusable unit of understanding. It captures how a domain expert frames the problem, what language matters, what data is trusted, what exceptions change the answer, what decision logic applies, and what quality bar the output must meet.

That kind of skill comes from experience: seeing patterns, understanding operating constraints, knowing what leaders care about, and recognizing when a technically correct answer is still wrong for the business.

Practical example

In transformation work for a semiconductor company, recurring work required resource logic, workflow critique, revenue and capacity judgment, executive communication, risk review, and decision continuity.

Those patterns became durable operating intelligence: not smarter-sounding AI, but AI that reasons with the domain context experienced leaders carry in their heads.

What becomes reusable

Domain logic	Decision judgment	Execution pattern
How the business problem actually works.	How to interpret, prioritize, and challenge.	What repeats across workflows, reviews, and decisions.

What a skill captures

Trigger	When the AI should use this way of working.
Context	The domain vocabulary, assumptions, constraints, and evidence that matter.
Procedure	The steps, sequence, checks, and decision rules that create reliable output.
Avoid	Failure modes, wrong assumptions, and paths not to repeat.

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The brain vault

01

Readable memory
Notes, decisions, patterns, journals, and skills.

02

Traceable evidence
Documents, decks, transcripts, screenshots, and outputs.

03

Queryable structure
Entities, relationships, status, actions, and governance.

04

Agent execution
Specialists that retrieve context and apply skills.

LEADER CHECKS

Where does our AI start from zero today?

Which recurring work should become a skill?

Who approves what the brain learns?

The AI brain is where experience becomes coherence.

A practical AI brain is not just a folder, a database, or a chatbot. It combines a human-readable knowledge workspace, a document repository, a structured intelligence database, specialized agents, reusable skills, retrieval, and governance. Each layer plays a different role.

Knowledge workspace	Obsidian-style vault for journals, decisions, architecture notes, patterns, and skills.
Document repository	Source documents, decks, transcripts, screenshots, generated outputs, and evidence.
Structured database	Queryable records for clients, projects, meetings, decisions, actions, agents, and skills.
Agent + skill layer	Specialized agents supported by reusable procedures, standards, preferences, and lessons.
Retrieval layer	Search, metadata, embeddings, and routing so the right context loads at the right time.
Governance loop	Review, correction, approval, and promotion of repeated work into durable skills.

Design principle

The vault is the memory substrate. The database is the structured intelligence layer. The document repository is the evidence base. Skills translate experience into action.

Leadership implication

Leaders should not ask only which AI model to use. They should ask what organizational intelligence should be captured, how it should be governed, and how it can be converted into skills that improve execution over time.

Map Identify recurring work where context and judgment matter.	Capture Turn repeated domain methods into skills.	Govern Review, approve, and improve what the brain learns.
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AVIS Consulting helps leaders turn AI ambition into operating capability through enterprise intelligence, systems architecture, and intelligent systems.