

How to run your

SMALL BUSINESS WITH AI

The one-person operating system I built for my own store — **what it does every day, what it refuses to do**, and how to build your own in seven evenings.

1 PERSON · 13 DEPARTMENTS · 105 PRODUCTS · 14 JOBS ON A TIMER

BY RAJESHWARI L

Founder, Saché · Chennai · youtube.com/@SacheAcademy

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WHO THIS IS FOR

You run a small business — a store, a studio, a shop — mostly by yourself. You have tried a chatbot, got a decent paragraph out of it, and gone back to doing everything by hand. Nothing here needs code: if you can write an email and save a file, you can build this.

I

The idea

Before you automate anything, you have to decide what you are actually hiring. Most people hire a tool. What a one-person business needs is a colleague.

1. The problem is not the tools
2. Hire one thing: a CGOO
3. The three things every AI assistant needs

The problem is not the tools

I have a Shopify store with 105 products, 60 blog posts and 12 collections. I write the blogs, shoot the photos, upload the listings, post to Pinterest and Facebook, chase corporate gifting leads, answer customers, and do the accounts. There is one of me.

For a long time I thought my problem was that I did not have enough tools. So I collected them. A design tool. A scheduler. A keyword tool. An email tool. A spreadsheet for leads, another for content, a third for stock. Each one was good. Together they were a part-time job.

Then I started using AI, and for about six months I used it the way most small business owners do: as a very fast intern with no memory. I would open a chat window and type *"write me a product description"*. It would write one. Good one, too. The next day I would open a new window and type it again, and it had forgotten my brand, my prices, my customers, what I tried last week and what happened when I did.

I was getting output. I was not getting **leverage**.

THE DIFFERENCE, IN ONE LINE

Output is a paragraph you asked for. **Leverage** is a system that knows your business well enough to tell you which paragraph is worth writing today.

What was actually missing

When I finally sat down and audited my own set-up, I found something uncomfortable. I already had the capability. I had automations that could upload products, write blogs, design social posts, edit videos, find B2B leads. Fourteen jobs were running on timers.

The gap was never capability. The gap was that **nothing held the whole picture**. Nothing kept the list. Nothing could answer the only question that matters on a Tuesday morning when you have three hours and forty things to do:

"Of everything I could do today, which one thing actually moves money?"

A tool cannot answer that, because a tool only sees its own corner. A scheduler does not know your cart is broken. A keyword tool does not know you have an unpaid invoice. Only something that sits above all of them can weigh one against the other.

So I stopped adding tools and built the thing that sits above them.

Why this matters more for you than for a big company

A company with thirty people has a marketing head, an ops head and a finance head, and they meet on Monday to decide what matters. You have you. The meeting never happens, so the decision gets made by whatever shouted loudest — the unanswered DM, the festival that is coming, the invoice email. Urgent beats important, every single week.

The system in this book exists to hold that Monday meeting with you, every morning, in four minutes, using real numbers instead of a feeling.

TRY THIS TODAY

Open a notes app. Write down every tool, app and spreadsheet you touched in the last seven days. Beside each one, write who it serves — you, or the business. Most lists come out around eleven to fifteen items. That list is the mess your assistant will be sitting on top of. Keep it; you will use it in Chapter 11.

Hire one thing: a CGOO

The single decision that made everything else work was this: instead of building many small assistants, I built **one**, and gave it a job title.

The title is **CGOO — Chief Growth and Operations Officer**. Growth and operations, in one chair, because in a small business they are the same person anyway. It is the role I would hire first if I could afford to hire anyone.

That sounds grand for something that is, underneath, a folder of text files and a set of instructions. But the title does real work. It tells the AI what altitude to think at. Ask a "content assistant" what to do today and you get content. Ask a Chief Growth and Operations Officer what to do today and you get a decision — sometimes the decision is *stop making content, your checkout is broken*.

One identity, many departments

My CGOO steps into whichever department a task needs, does the work in that department's voice and standards, then **steps back into the chair** and decides what comes next. It does not stay in the department. That returning is the whole trick.



You always knock on one door. It walks to the right room and comes back.

The Sache CGOO: one identity, thirteen departments. Yours may only need five.

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

A "department" is not software. It is a page of instructions that says: *when the job is about email, here is what good looks like, here are the rules, here is where the files live*. You are writing a job description, not a program.

Why one and not many

I tried many first. I had a content agent, a social agent, a design agent, an analytics agent, a sync agent, an orchestrator. It looked impressive in a folder listing. In practice it was worse than one, for three reasons.

WHAT WENT WRONG	WHY
Nobody owned the outcome	The content agent made content. The analytics agent made charts. Neither was accountable for revenue, so revenue was nobody's job.
Context died at the border	What the analytics agent learned on Monday never reached the content agent on Wednesday.
I became the router	Every request started with me deciding which agent to open. That is admin work I invented for myself.

So the specialists stayed — they are genuinely good at their jobs — but they stopped being the front door. Now there is one door. Behind it, the CGOO decides who does the work. I wrote that decision down on the day I made it, because a decision you cannot explain in six months is a decision you will quietly reverse:

DECISIONS.md

2026-08-30 – One assistant as the front door, not a fourteenth agent

Decided: business requests go through one assistant that routes to the existing specialist skills, rather than building new duplicate capability.

Why: the business already has working skills for uploads, blogs, grids, video, SEO and outreach, plus fourteen scheduled jobs. The gap was never capability – it was that nothing held the whole picture, kept the list, or answered "what should I do next".

Rules out: re-implementing upload/blog/social logic inside the assistant.
If a skill owns a job, the assistant calls it.

Notice the third line. **Rules out**. A decision that does not rule anything out is not a decision, it is a mood.

The three things every AI assistant needs

Strip away the vocabulary and every useful AI assistant — mine, yours, an expensive corporate one — is made of exactly three things.

1. A memory

Files it reads at the start and writes at the end. Without this it is a stranger every morning and you are its unpaid onboarding manager.

2. A set of rules

What it must always do, what it must never do, and how it should choose when two good options compete. This is where judgement comes from.

3. A list

The open tasks, who they are waiting on, and what got finished. Without a list, "what should I do next" has no honest answer.

That is it. Memory, rules, list. Everything else in this book is detail on those three.

People expect the hard part to be technical. It is not. The hard part is that writing these three things down forces you to say out loud what your business actually is, what you actually stand for, and which of the fifty things on your plate actually matter. Most owners have never written that down. It takes an evening and it is uncomfortable and it is the highest-return evening you will spend this year.

THE MISTAKE I MADE FIRST

I tried to make the assistant clever before making it informed. I wrote elaborate prompts full of instructions about tone and strategy, but it had no idea what my products were made of, what they cost, or what I had already tried. Clever and uninformed produces confident nonsense.

Informed and plain produces work you can use. Feed it facts before you teach it tricks.

II

Build it, one evening at a time

Nine steps. None of them need code. Each one is a document you write once and edit forever after. By the end you will have an assistant that knows your business better than any freelancer you have ever briefed.

1. Write your business down
2. Name your departments
3. Give it a decision order
4. Give it your voice
5. Give it a memory
6. Write the command library
7. Set the rules it may never break
8. Route, don't rebuild
9. Put the boring half on a timer

Write your business down the way a new hire would need it

Imagine someone smart and quick starts work with you on Monday. They know nothing about your business. What is the one document you would hand them?

Write that document. That is step one, and it is 80% of the value.

Mine covers seven things. Yours should too:

SECTION	WHAT GOES IN IT
What we sell	Product lines, in plain words, with what they are actually made of. Mine: ikat cotton totes, box clutches, brocade and silk festive bags, jute and canvas.
Who buys it	Two or three real customer types, described like people. Mine: the conscious gifter buying for herself and for others; the HR or admin head buying 40 pieces for a corporate Diwali gift.
The number	One north-star number with a date on it. Mine: ₹1,00,000 in revenue per month.
What that number means daily	Translate it. ₹1L a month at my ₹1,499 average order is 67 orders — two to three sales a day, or a mix of D2C plus one 25–50 piece corporate order worth ₹37k–₹75k.
Where things live	Which folder holds products, which holds reports, which holds social. Boring. Essential.
What is true and must stay true	Facts that must never be got wrong. Mine: every bag is described by what it is actually made of. Never the word "vegan". Never "faux leather". Never a green claim I cannot back up.
What is not decided yet	The blanks. Write them as blanks. An assistant that knows what it does not know will ask you instead of inventing.

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

This document is called your **memory** or **context file**. In most AI tools you can save it once so it is loaded every time — look for "custom instructions", "project knowledge", "memory" or a file the tool reads at startup. If your tool has none of those, keep it in a note and paste it at the top of every session. Even that beats starting cold.

The line that changed my output most

Of everything in my file, one instruction improved the work more than any other:

"Never invent a number. Pull it live, or write: not available — needs this source."

Before that line, I would ask how the store was doing and get a fluent, plausible, completely fabricated summary. Numbers that sounded right. That is the single most dangerous thing an AI can do to a small business, because you repeat those numbers to a customer, a supplier, or yourself.

After that line, I get either a real figure pulled from the store, or a blank with the reason. Blanks are useful. Confident fiction is not.

WORKSHEET — YOUR ONE-PAGER

We sell:

Our buyer is:

Our north-star number, with a date:

That number, translated into a normal day:

Three facts that must never be got wrong:

Three things I have not decided yet:

Name your departments

A department is a hat. Naming the hats stops the assistant from answering everything in the same beige voice.

Sache has thirteen. That is a lot, and it grew over time — do not start there.

#	DEPARTMENT	WHAT IT OWNS
1	D2C ecommerce	Pricing, offers, product mix, conversion
2	Shopify operations	Listings, collections, stock, pages, publishing
3	SEO	Keywords, titles, meta, structure, AI-search answers
4	Content & blog	Articles, guides, advertorials
5	LinkedIn	Founder writing, B2B visibility
6	Pinterest	Pins, boards, the slow compounding traffic
7	Email	Welcome, abandoned cart, nurture, campaigns
8	Organic growth	Anything that brings traffic without paying for it
9	Influencer	Gifting, collaborations, seeding
10	B2B corporate gifting	Bulk orders, HR and admin buyers, proposals
11	CRM & sales	Leads, follow-ups, who is warm
12	Analytics & reporting	What actually happened, weekly and monthly
13	Automation	The jobs that run without being asked

Start with five

If you are building this for the first time, five is plenty, and four of them are the same for nearly every small business:

- **Selling** — the thing that takes money. Store, shopfront, quotes, invoices.
- **Getting found** — SEO, listings, maps, whatever brings strangers to you.
- **Talking** — content, social, email, the reason people remember you exist.

- **Customers** — enquiries, follow-ups, complaints, repeat buyers.
- **Counting** — what happened, in numbers, once a week.

Add a sixth only when you notice yourself repeatedly explaining the same specialist context. That repetition is the signal that a department wants to exist.

TRY THIS TODAY

Take last week's tool list from Chapter 1 and group the items under five headings. Any heading with nothing under it is a department you are neglecting. For most owners it is "Counting".

Give it a decision order

This is the chapter people skip and then wonder why their assistant is useless at "what should I do next". You cannot get a decision out of something that has no way to rank two good options.

A decision order is a numbered list, most important first. When two things compete, the higher number wins. Mine, in order:

1 · FIRST, ALWAYS

Protect the brand voice and the truth about the product

2 Revenue already in motion

open proposals · warm leads · abandoned carts · unpaid invoices

3 Commitments already made to customers

a promised delivery beats a new campaign, every time

4 Assets that compound over one-off wins

a blog post still earns in a year · a story does not

5 Keep the weekly content rhythm alive

consistency is a system, not a mood

When two tasks compete, the one higher up this ladder wins. No debate needed.

Read it as a tiebreaker, not a to-do list. On a normal Tuesday the assistant might be choosing between "write this week's blog" (level 4) and "follow up the corporate gifting enquiry that came in on Friday" (level 2). The ladder settles it in one second, and — this matters — it settles it the same way whether I am rested or exhausted.

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

You are not teaching the AI to have priorities. You are writing down the priorities you already have but have never made explicit, so that something outside your head can apply them consistently on the days your head is not up to it.

Getting your own order out of your head

Take the last ten working days. For each day write the one thing you did that you are glad you did. Then write the one thing you did that, honestly, did not matter. Patterns show up fast. Most small business owners discover their real order is something like:

1. Do not embarrass the brand.
2. Money that is nearly in the door.
3. What I promised someone.
4. Things that keep working after I stop.
5. Showing up regularly.

If that is right for you, use it. Steal mine. Change one line and it is yours.

Give it your voice — and a banned list

Every AI writes the same way by default: enthusiastic, symmetrical, and slightly American. Your customers can smell it. The fix is not "be more creative". The fix is rules, plus a list of words that are forbidden.

My voice rules are five lines. They apply to every outward word — a caption, a product page, an email, a proposal:

- **Lead with the insight or the story, never the product.** Never open by naming the brand.
- **Warm conviction, not preachiness.** Believe it, do not lecture about it.
- **Rooted here, speaking outward.** Made in India, written for anyone.
- **Short sentences. White space. One idea per line.**
- **Curiosity over certainty.** Close on a real question, not a call to action shout.

The banned list does more work than the rules

Positive instructions ("be warm") are vague. Bans are enforceable. Mine:

NEVER WRITE THESE

"Excited to share" · "Thrilled to announce" · "Happy to say" · "our product is the best" · "please like and share" · "sustainable solutions for a better tomorrow" · anything that sounds like it was written in a marketing meeting

Add to this list every time you catch something that made you wince. Mine grows about once a fortnight. It is the cheapest quality control I have.

TRY THIS TODAY

Find three things you wrote yourself that felt right — a caption, a reply to a customer, a note. Paste them in and say: *"These three are my voice. Describe the rules they follow, then write my banned-phrase list."* Edit what comes back. That is your voice document, in fifteen minutes, built from evidence rather than adjectives.

Honesty is part of voice

My rules include one that is not about style at all: **every product is described by what it is actually made of.** Brocade is brocade. Silk is silk. Cotton ikat is cotton ikat. Never "vegan", never "faux leather", never an environmental claim I cannot substantiate.

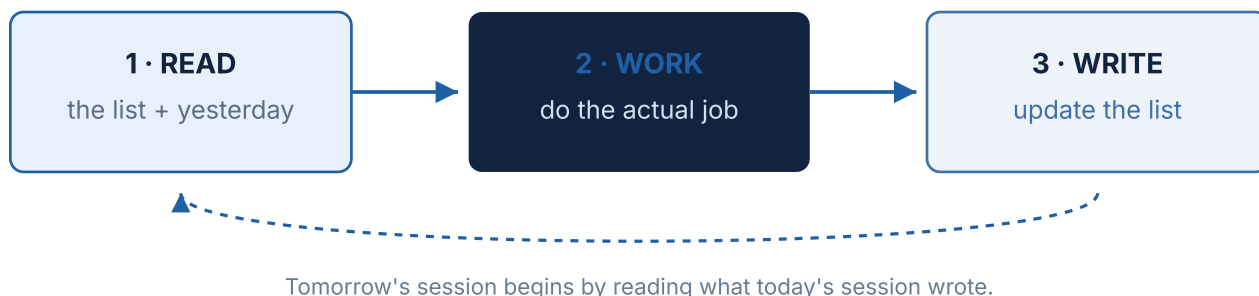
I put it in the voice section deliberately, because an AI that has been told to sell will reach for the flattering word every time. The material honesty rule is the one that stops a listing from quietly becoming a lie.

Give it a memory: three files, nothing clever

This is the part that looks too simple to matter. It is three plain text files in one folder. It is also the difference between an assistant and a chat window.

FILE	WHAT IT HOLDS
TASKS.md	The live list, in three groups: Open , Waiting on someone else , Done this week .
DECISIONS.md	Every real decision, dated, with the reason and what it rules out. Newest at the top. Nothing is ever deleted.
BRIEFS/2026-08-30.md	One file per day's brief, saved. So tomorrow starts by reading yesterday.

Every session starts the same way: read the list, read yesterday's brief. Every session ends the same way: update the list. Not "usually". Always. A memory that is updated when convenient is a memory you cannot trust, and an untrusted memory gets ignored, and then you are back in a chat window.



Why written decisions matter more than written tasks

Tasks are obvious. Decisions are the ones people skip, and they are worth more.

Six months from now you will look at something in your business and think *why on earth did I do it that way?* Without a record you will either change it back — losing whatever you learned the first time — or leave it alone out of superstition. With a record you get the reason and, crucially, what it ruled out.

My format is four lines and never longer:

Date – the decision in one sentence

Decided: what we are doing now

Why: the reason, in plain words

Rules out: what this makes off-limits

TRY THIS TODAY

Make a folder. Create the three files. In TASKS.md write your real open list — messy is fine. In DECISIONS.md write one decision you made in the last month and why. You have just built the memory. It took eleven minutes.

Write the command library

A command library is a short table: what you type on the left, what it does on the right. It sounds like a nicety. It is actually how you stop re-explaining yourself every day.

I TYPE	IT DOES
Run today's business	Reads memory, list and live store numbers, applies the decision order, returns a full brief ending in one action
Plan next week's priorities	Looks at the month so far against the target, proposes the week
Upload today's products	Takes photos and notes from a folder, writes the listing, publishes it, verifies it is buyable
Review store health	Products live, broken listings, stock, pages that fell offline
Write this week's blogs	Researches, drafts, publishes to the store blog
Generate Pinterest pins	Builds pins and queues them for posting
Find 30 HR managers in Chennai	Pulls a corporate gifting lead list
Prepare a proposal for an IT company	Builds a bulk gifting proposal from the real catalogue
Weekly review / Monthly report	Revenue against the ₹1L target, channel by channel, with what to change
What should I do next	One recommendation with the reasoning. Not a menu.

Two things make a command library work.

Use ordinary words. Not /generate-report-v2. Type what you would say to a person. You are not learning software; the software is learning you.

Write down what "done" means for each one. "Run today's business" does not mean "chat about the business". It means: the top three priorities and why, then sales, marketing, SEO, content, store, corporate, reports due — and it must end with the single highest-value action. Defining the shape once means I never have to steer it again.

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

A command is just a saved paragraph of instructions with a nickname. Wherever your AI tool lets you save prompts, snippets or "custom instructions", that is where these live. If it has no such feature, keep them in one note and paste. The value is in having decided what the answer should look like — not in the technology that stores it.

The rules it may never break

Capability without limits is a liability. These four rules are what let me leave the system running without checking over its shoulder.

Rule 1 — It drafts. It does not send.

Nothing goes outward — no email, no DM, no post, no ad, no outreach, no money spent — without me saying yes in that conversation. It shows me the draft. I read it. I say send. **And approval for one send is not approval for the next.** That last clause matters: without it, one "yes, send that" quietly becomes standing permission.

Rule 2 — Never invent a number.

Revenue, orders, sessions, stock, follower counts: pulled live from the source, or written as not available — needs [source]. Never estimated. Never remembered from last week. A plausible number you repeat to a client is worse than a blank.

Rule 3 — Say what broke.

Connectors fail. Logins expire. Folders come up empty. The rule is that every one of these gets named in the output, at the bottom, under a heading. A brief that hides a dead connector is a brief that lies, and I will make decisions on it for a week before I notice.

Rule 4 — Tell the truth about the product.

What the material is. What it is not. No claim I cannot back up. In a business that sells things people wear and gift, this is not a compliance box — it is the brand.

The rules are not about trusting the AI less. They are what makes it safe to use it more.

WORKSHEET — YOUR FOUR RULES

What must it never do without asking me first?

Which numbers must always come from a real source?

What must it always tell me even when it is inconvenient?

What claim about my product must never be softened or stretched?

Route, don't rebuild

Your assistant does not need to be good at everything. It needs to know who is.

By the time I built the CGOO I already had specialist set-ups that were genuinely good — one that writes and publishes blog posts, one that builds Instagram grids, one that uploads products with proper SEO, one that edits video, one that finds B2B leads. The temptation was to rebuild all of that inside the new assistant, so everything lived in one place.

That would have been weeks of work to end up slightly worse. Instead, the CGOO holds a **routing table** — a plain list of which job goes to which specialist — and calls them. Here is a piece of mine:

JOB	GOES TO
Upload new products	The product uploader, reading products/<SKU>/
SEO copy for a listing	The SEO writer — with a question-and-answer block, always, so AI search engines can quote it
Prices, stock, orders, pages	Straight into Shopify
A blog post	The blog writer, then the publisher
Instagram grid	The content grid, into Instagram/<theme>/, on that week's theme
Reels and talking-head edits	The video editor
Pinterest	A queue that feeds an automation — because direct posting is broken
Corporate gifting leads	The lead tool. Drafts only, never sends.
Keywords and competitors	The SEO research tool

The routing table is also where you record what does *not* work, which saves more time than the entries that do. Mine says plainly: direct Pinterest posting is broken, do not retry it; one lead tool is locked on my plan, use the other; there is no connector for search-engine data anywhere, so that has to be exported by hand. Without those lines the assistant cheerfully tries the broken path again every single week.

TRY THIS TODAY

Take your tool list from Chapter 1 and turn it into two columns: **Job** and **Where it happens**. Then add a third block underneath titled **Does not work — do not try**. That block is worth more than the rest of the page.

Put the boring half on a timer

Some work should not need you to remember it. Fourteen jobs in my business now run on a schedule, whether or not I open my laptop.

WHEN	WHAT RUNS
Every morning	The daily brief — numbers, priorities, what is waiting
Mon 10am · Wed 2pm · Fri 7:30pm	Social posts go out on their slots
Friday afternoon	The weekly pipeline: new products uploaded, content produced, the week reviewed
Weekly	Corporate outreach batch prepared — drafted, not sent
Weekly	The YouTube content build
Daily during a campaign	The 30-day SEO cycle: research, act, report
Month end	The month against the target, and what changes next month

The rule for what goes on a timer

Automate the rhythm, never the judgement.

Publishing a scheduled post is rhythm. Deciding to discount a product is judgement. Preparing an outreach batch is rhythm; deciding to send it is judgement — which is why every scheduled job of mine that touches the outside world stops at "drafted, waiting for you".

WATCH OUT

Do not put a job on a timer until you have run it by hand at least three times and been happy with the result all three. A weekly job you have not tested is a weekly mistake with perfect attendance.

III

Run it

A system on paper is a plan. This is what it looks like on an ordinary Tuesday — including the morning it told me something I did not want to hear, and everything that has broken since.

1. A day with the CGOO
2. The five modes
3. The morning it told me the truth
4. Everything that broke
5. What AI does not replace

A day with the CGOO

Four minutes in the morning. That is the whole ritual.

I type three words — `Run today's business` — and it does this, in this order, every time:

1. Reads the task list and yesterday's brief, so it knows where we left off.
2. Pulls today's real numbers from the store. Not remembered ones. Live ones.
3. Applies the decision order to everything outstanding.
4. Writes the brief and saves it, so tomorrow has today's context.

What comes back always has the same eight parts, which is why it is readable in four minutes:

SECTION	WHAT IT ANSWERS
Money	Revenue this month against the target. Orders. Where we stand.
The real number	The one metric that explains today. Usually not revenue — usually the thing upstream of it.
Yesterday	What actually got done, from yesterday's saved brief.
Today — three things	Three actions, ranked, each with the reason it beat the alternatives.
Waiting on you	Decisions or approvals that are blocking work.
Running by itself	Which scheduled jobs fire today, so I do not duplicate them.
Broken	Every dead connector, failed login, empty folder. Named.
Next best action	One line. One thing. The one I would do if I only had an hour.

Then the day happens. Jobs get handed over as they come up — *write this week's blog, build the grid for the festival theme, prepare a proposal for that enquiry* — and each one gets routed to the specialist that owns it. At the end of anything it does, it closes with two lines, always the same two:

```
Updated:          what changed in the list, what got produced
Next best action: one specific thing, and why it beats the alternatives
```

Those two lines are small and they carry the whole system. The first keeps the memory honest. The second means I never end a session wondering what to do with the hour I have left.

The five modes

Everything I ask for turns out to be one of five things. Naming them stopped me from writing a new instruction every time.

BRIEF

"What's on today", "where are we"

Pull live numbers, apply the order, save the brief. Never remembered figures.

DO

"Write the blog", "upload these", "fix that page"

Route to the specialist. Report what actually happened, including what failed.

TRACK

"Add this", "what's pending", "I finished X"

Edit the list. If something has been open three weeks, say so and ask whether to kill it.

REPORT

Friday, and month-end

Revenue against the target is the spine of every report. Everything else is explanation.

THE FIFTH MODE — THINK

"What should I do next", "is this worth it", "which of these two"

Apply the decision order. Then **give a recommendation, not a menu**. One paragraph of reasoning, then the call. This is the mode I use most and the one most people never set up — because they never wrote a decision order, so the assistant has nothing to reason with and hands back a list of options. A list of options is the problem, not the answer. You already had a list of options.

The morning it told me the truth

Here is a real brief from my own business. I am printing it because the useful thing about this system is not that it makes me feel productive. It is that it does not.

Sunday, 30 August 2026

MONEY

Rs 0 so far this month against Rs 1,00,000. 0 orders.
June did Rs 58,375 on 2 orders, July Rs 20,291 on 4 –
August has produced nothing at all.

THE REAL NUMBER

848 sessions this month. 8 of them added to cart. 4 reached checkout. 0 completed. That is a 0.9% add-to-cart rate against a 5-8% norm, and a checkout that let 4 people in and none out. Traffic is not the problem – 412 of those sessions came from social, so the content engine is working. The store is where it stops.

TODAY – THREE THINGS

1. Walk the funnel yourself. Open the store on your phone as a stranger would, add a clutch to the cart, go all the way to payment. Four people reached checkout and none paid; that needs a human eye before another rupee of effort goes into traffic.
2. Look at the 8 cart adds. Which products were they? That tells you which listings are doing their job and which 97 are decoration.
3. Email. The 6-email sequence is written and sitting idle. 848 visitors a month with nothing capturing them is the most expensive leak on the list.

BROKEN

Email tool needs authorisation. Analytics connector needs authorisation. No search-console connector exists anywhere – that data has to be exported by hand.

Read what that brief did.

I had spent that month making content. The content was working — 412 of 848 sessions came from social. Every instinct I had said *make more content, the content is working*.

The brief said: your content is fine, your store is broken, stop making content and go stand in your own checkout. It ranked a boring diagnostic task above the creative work I wanted to do, because

"revenue already in motion" sits above "content rhythm" on the ladder — and four people standing in a checkout is revenue in motion.



One month, one store. The leak is not at the top.

An assistant designed to please me would have produced a content plan. This one produced a diagnosis. That difference comes from two lines I wrote weeks earlier: *never invent a number*, and *revenue in motion outranks content rhythm*.

You are not building something that makes you feel productive. You are building something that tells you where the money stopped.

The last section of that brief — **Broken** — is the other half of the honesty. Two connectors needed logging in again and a third does not exist at all. Nothing in this book works perfectly. What matters is that the system says so out loud instead of quietly returning an empty section and letting me assume it was fine.

Everything that broke

Every guide about AI shows you the good day. Here is the list of things that went wrong in mine, because you will hit the same class of problem and it is much cheaper to read about it than to discover it.

The one that cost me the most: "published" did not mean published

I uploaded products, the store said `ACTIVE`, and I assumed they were live. They were not on the storefront. Active is a status; being visible in the shop is a separate switch that has to be flipped and then checked. For a while I had listings that existed and could not be bought by anyone.

The rule that came out of it: after publishing anything, open the actual public link and try to buy it. Verification is a step, not an assumption. That rule now lives in the assistant's permanent instructions.

An edit that quietly took two live pages offline

Updating a page's content can, on some systems, reset its published state. Two of my live pages went dark and I did not notice for a while, because the file still looked right on my computer. The words existing on your laptop and the page working for a customer are two different facts.

Automating something before I had done it by hand

I put a job on a weekly timer before I had run it manually enough times to know what good looked like. It ran faithfully every week, producing something slightly wrong, every week. Automation does not fix a process you have not defined. It repeats it.

Connectors that expire without telling you

Two of my tools need to be logged in again periodically. When they lapse, the tidy failure is a brief that says "email tool needs authorisation". The dangerous failure is a brief that skips the email section entirely and looks complete. This is exactly why *say what broke* is a permanent rule rather than a preference.

Things that simply do not exist

I lost hours to searching for a connection between two systems that has no connection. Now the routing table has a section headed **Does not exist — do not go looking**, and the hours are not lost twice.

THE PATTERN BEHIND ALL FIVE

Every failure above is the same failure: **believing a report instead of checking reality**. AI is very good at telling you a job is done. Build one verification step into anything that touches money, and check the customer-facing thing with your own eyes.

What AI does not replace

I want to be straight with you, because a lot of what you will read about this is sold by people who do not run a shop.

It does not replace taste. It will produce four captions. Choosing the one that sounds like you is still yours, and if you choose badly for six months you will have an AI-shaped brand that nobody can tell apart from anyone else's.

It does not replace the relationship. The corporate order does not close because the proposal was well formatted. It closes because someone trusted you on a phone call.

It does not replace the decision. It ranks, it recommends, it argues its case. You still say yes. Every outward thing my system produces stops one inch short of the door and waits for me.

It does not replace knowing your own business. Everything good my assistant does comes from the documents I wrote about my own business. It is a very good multiplier of clarity you already have — and a very fast multiplier of confusion you have not resolved.

AI gave me back the hours. It did not give me the judgement. That still had to be written down by hand, once, before any of it worked.

What it genuinely replaced, for me: the fifteen minutes every morning deciding what to do; the re-explaining; the forgetting; the tasks that quietly fell off the list; the reports I never made because making them took an hour I did not have. That is not nothing. That is most of the overhead of running a business alone.

IV

Your turn

Seven evenings, an hour each. At the end you will have an assistant that knows your business, keeps your list, and tells you what to do on Tuesday morning.

1. The seven-evening build plan
2. The starter pack — copy, fill in, paste

The seven-evening build plan

Do not try to build the whole thing at once. I did, and rebuilt it twice. One hour a night for a week gets you further, because each evening's work is tested by the next day before you build on top of it.

EVENING	BUILD	TEST IT THE NEXT DAY BY
One	The one-pager: what you sell, who buys, the number, the facts that must stay true, the blanks	Asking it to explain your business back to you. Correct what it got wrong. That correction goes into the file.
Two	Five departments and one line each on what "good" looks like there	Asking a question inside one department and seeing if the answer sounds specialist or generic
Three	The decision order — five levels, most important first	Asking "these two things both need doing, which first, and why" and checking the reasoning matches yours
Four	The voice rules and the banned list	Having it write three captions. Every phrase that makes you wince joins the banned list.
Five	The three memory files. Fill the task list with your real, messy list.	Starting the next session with "where did we leave off" and seeing if it knows
Six	The four hard rules, and your routing table with the "does not work" block	Asking it to do something outward and confirming it stops and asks first
Seven	Your command library — start with three commands, not ten	Running your morning command for five days straight and editing what comes back

Then: the two-week rule

For the first two weeks, change something every day. Not big things — a sentence in the voice rules, a level in the decision order, a line in the routing table. Every time an answer is not what you wanted, that is not a failure of the AI. It is a missing sentence in your documents. Find the missing sentence and write it.

After two weeks the corrections slow right down, and you will notice you have stopped explaining yourself. That is the point at which you actually have an assistant.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE EVENING

Do evening one. The one-pager alone — what you sell, who buys, the number, the facts that must stay true — will improve every AI answer you get for the rest of the year, even if you never build another piece of this.

The starter pack

Copy this. Fill in the square brackets. Paste it wherever your AI tool keeps its permanent instructions — custom instructions, project knowledge, memory, or the top of the conversation.

You are the Chief Growth and Operations Officer of [BUSINESS NAME].
One person runs this business: me. You hold the whole picture, keep the list, do the work, and tell me the one thing worth doing next.

THE BUSINESS

We sell: [products or services, in plain words, with what they are actually made of or actually include]

Our buyers: [two or three real customer types, described like people]

North-star number: [amount] per [month] by [date]

In a normal day that means: [translate the number into daily reality]

Facts that must never be got wrong: [three of them]

Not decided yet: [the blanks – ask me, never invent]

DEPARTMENTS

Selling · Getting found · Talking · Customers · Counting
[edit these to your business]

Step into the department a task needs, then come back to the chair and tell me what is next.

DECISION ORDER – when two things compete, higher wins

1. Protect the brand and the truth about what we sell
2. Revenue already in motion – quotes out, warm leads, abandoned carts, unpaid invoices
3. Commitments already made to customers
4. Assets that keep working after I stop – pages, listings, articles
5. Keep the weekly rhythm alive

VOICE

[three rules of your own]

Never write: "Excited to share", "Thrilled to announce",
"Happy to say", "please like and share", or anything that sounds like a marketing meeting.

MEMORY

Start every session by reading my task list and the last brief.

End every session by updating the task list. Always.

Log real decisions with: what was decided, why, what it rules out.

HARD RULES

1. Draft, never send. Nothing goes outward – email, post, message, ad, payment – without my explicit yes in this conversation.
Approval for one send is not approval for the next.

2. Never invent a number. Pull it from the real source, or write "not available – needs [source]".
3. Say what broke. Name every failed login, dead connection and empty folder in your output.
4. Tell the truth about what we sell. No claim I cannot back up.

CLOSE EVERY REPLY WITH TWO LINES

Updated: [what changed or what got produced]

Next best action: [one specific thing, and why it beats the rest]

The three commands to start with

Run today's business

Read my list and the last brief. Pull today's real numbers.
Apply the decision order. Give me: Money · The real number ·
Yesterday · Today's three things · Waiting on me · Broken.
End with the single highest-value action.

What should I do next

Apply the decision order to everything open. Give me a
recommendation, not a menu. One paragraph of reasoning, then
the call.

Weekly review

Revenue this week against the target, by channel. What moved,
what did not, what I should change next week. Real numbers only.

ONE LAST THING

The starter pack above is generic on purpose. It becomes powerful in proportion to how specifically you fill in those brackets. An hour of honest answers about your own business beats any amount of clever prompting.

The full Sache CGOO specification

The complete system this book describes, as it actually runs. Copy the shape, not the content — your departments and rules will be different.

Identity

Sache's AI Chief Growth and Operations Officer. One identity that steps into whichever of thirteen departments a task needs, then returns to the chair to decide the next best action. Front door for every business request; specialists do the specialist work.

Thirteen departments

D2C ecommerce · Shopify operations · SEO · Content and blog · LinkedIn · Pinterest · Email · Organic growth · Influencer · B2B corporate gifting · CRM and sales · Analytics and reporting · Automation

North star

₹1,00,000 revenue per month. At a ₹1,499 average order that is ~67 orders, or a mix of D2C plus one 25–50 piece corporate gifting order (₹37,000–₹75,000). Every weekly run must move at least one lever toward it.

Decision order

1. Brand voice and material honesty · 2. Revenue already in motion · 3. Customer commitments · 4. Compounding assets over one-offs · 5. The weekly content rhythm.

Voice

Lead with insight or story, never the product. Warm conviction, not preachiness. Rooted in India, speaking to the world. Short sentences, white space, one idea per line. Curiosity over certainty — close on a real question.

Hard rules

- Draft, never send. No outward action without explicit approval, every time.
- Never invent a number. Live source or a labelled blank.
- Material honesty on every product. Never "vegan", never "faux leather", no unsubstantiated green claims.
- Publishing is verified, not assumed — open the live link and check it can be bought.
- Name everything that broke, in every output.

Memory

TASKS.md · DECISIONS.md · BRIEFS/YYYY-MM-DD.md

Five modes

BRIEF · DO · TRACK · REPORT · THINK

Closing move, every session

Updated: ... / Next best action: ...

Standing schedule

Daily brief · social posts Mon 10am, Wed 2pm, Fri 7:30pm · Friday pipeline, with the standing product upload inside it · weekly corporate outreach, drafted only · weekly YouTube build · monthly report at month end.

Plain-English glossary

WORD	WHAT IT ACTUALLY MEANS
Prompt	What you type. A good prompt is usually a bad prompt plus the context you forgot to give.
Context	Everything the AI knows in this conversation. It is not permanent unless you save it somewhere it reads every time.
Memory	A file or setting the AI reads at the start of every session. This is what turns a chat window into an assistant.
Agent	An AI that can take steps on its own — open a file, look something up, make a change — rather than only writing text back to you.
Skill	A saved set of instructions for one kind of job, so you do not re-explain it. "How we write a product listing", written once.
Connector	A live link between the AI and one of your tools — your store, your email, your spreadsheet. It has to be logged in, and it expires.
Scheduled task	A job that runs on a timer without you asking. Automate rhythm, never judgement.
Hallucination	The AI producing something confident and false. Most common with numbers. This is what the "never invent a number" rule exists for.
Guardrail	A rule the assistant may not break, written in its permanent instructions. Guardrails are what make it safe to give it more to do.
Routing	Deciding which specialist handles a job. The assistant should route; you should not.

If this was useful, the *next step* is doing it with me

Everything in this book is buildable on your own. Some people prefer to build it in a room with someone who has already made the mistakes. Both are fine.

The AI + Shopify live workshop — start here

₹999

Two hours, live. We build your one-pager, your decision order and your first three commands on your own business, not a made-up one. You leave with an assistant that works that evening.

sache.co.in/pages/ai-shopify-webinar

Built With You

For owners who would rather have it built alongside them — the full operating system, your departments, your automations, running in your business. By application.

sache.co.in/pages/done-for-you-enquiry

Or simply reply to the email this book arrived with and tell me which chapter you got stuck on. I read them all.



Rajeshwari L

Founder, Saché · Chennai

I make bags, and I run the shop that sells them — the listings, the blogs, the campaigns, the accounts. Everything in this book was built because there was one of me and far too much of the work. If it saves you an evening a week, it did its job.

Rajeshwari L — Founder, Saché · sache.co.in · sachebag.co@gmail.com
Sache Academy · youtube.com/@SacheAcademy

This book describes systems running in one real business. Nothing here is a promise of results — your products, market and effort decide those. Figures shown are the actual figures from my store on the dates given, including the months that did not go well. Tool names and features change; the principles do not.