IT DOESN'T HURT TO ASK…

An MIT xPRO Guide to Discussing Professional Development with Your Employer

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1. Take a look at the **Deploying AI for Strategic Impact** course page. Note which topics and learning outcomes align with your company and team goals.

2. Review the "Why Learn Strategic AI for Real ROI" section on page two of this guide and "Common Objections" on page three to help you develop an email for your manager or initiate a conversation with them.

3. Customize the yellow areas high-lighted in the email template on page four of this guide and send the email to your manager.

4. Need any other information about the course that might help your case? Email us at xpro@mit.edu.

WHY LEARN STRATEGIC AI FOR REAL ROI

Bring these facts and figures into the conversation.

> 78% of organizations used AI in 2024 compared to 55% the year before, showing rapid adoption and the growing need for strategic AI knowledge. **(Source)**

> 64% of executives reported feeling "a high sense of urgency to adopt generative AI," but over half of those respondents admitted that their organization is lacking "the most critical skills." **(Source)**

> 74% of companies struggle to scale AI solutions, remaining stuck in the "proof-of-concept" phase and unable to achieve widespread impact. **(Source)**

> Only 13% of companies worldwide are prepared to fully leverage AI and AI-powered technologies. **(Source)**

> The average AI maturity score across 1,000 leading organizations is just 24.5 out of 100, indicating that most companies are still in early stages of AI readiness. **(Source)**

> Companies that focus on AI investment are 35% more likely to surpass competitors in revenue growth. **(Source)**

> 92% of early AI adopters report their investments are already paying for themselves. **(Source)**

COMMON OBJECTIONS

Your employer will have questions. Let's help you answer them.

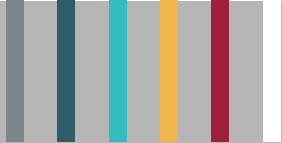| OBJECTION	RESPONSE
"It costs too much."	It might cost more to neglect workforce training. Companies that prioritize employee development make a median revenue of $169,100 per employee, while companies that don't make less than half of that: $82,800. **(Source)**
"It will take you too much time and distract you from your work."	The course is designed for professionals, with an estimated time commitment of 4-6 hours per week for only 9 weeks. Learning a new skill does take time, but the format is flexible, allowing learners the ability to watch lectures, read case studies, and practice new technologies on their own schedule. Plus, the time a company invests in training will save them in the long run. A study by the National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce (EQW) supports this, finding that a 10% increase in educational development produced an 8.6% gain in productivity. **(Source)**
"How is this different from those other online courses?"	MIT xPRO courses are created and taught by MIT faculty and are optimized for learners who are full-time working professionals. The **Deploying AI for Strategic Impact** course leverages industry case studies, hands-on exercises, and video lectures featuring the latest thinking from 15 MIT faculty members to equip learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions about AI investments, deployment strategies, and business alignment.

EMAIL TEMPLATE

Copy and paste the following text into an email to your manager or HR professional.

Hi [Manager's Name],

I would like to submit a request for professional development through the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's online course, **Deploying AI for Strategic Impact.** This nine-week online course offers training that I believe is directly relevant and beneficial to what we're trying to accomplish within [Our Company Name].

The course leverages industry case studies, hands-on exercises, and the latest thinking from 15 MIT faculty members to equip learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions about AI investments, deployment strategies, and business alignment.

Here's a brief summary of what I will take away from the course:

- Evaluate AI systems and deployment strategies by understanding core components, scaling implications, and cost-performance trade-offs.

- Compare and customize generative AI models using performance benchmarks, application suitability, and deployment formats to drive ROI.

- Plan for compute and infrastructure needs by assessing how modern AI models evolve and how hardware, algorithms, and cost affect AI investments.

- Turn complex, multi-modal data into insights through representation learning, embeddings, and human-in-the-loop systems for decision-making support.

- Navigate workforce and organizational shifts by applying productivity, automation, and agile deploy-ment frameworks to maximize business value.

- Address ethical and operational risks by identifying bias, privacy concerns, and safety issues—especially in high-stakes domains like healthcare—and applying practical mitigation strategies.

The course costs $3,950 and starts on [Start Date]. It is designed for full-time working professionals, so the schedule will not interfere with my current position.

For more information, visit: https://xpro.mit.edu/courses/course-v1:xPRO+DAI/

Thank you for considering my training request,

[Your Name]