

The Agentic AI Readiness Worksheet

Narrow, checkable, supervised agents work. Sweeping autonomous ones demo well and fail in production. This is how to tell which you are about to build.

Is your task a good agentic candidate?

The difference between a project that works and one that embarrasses you is mostly scope, checkability, and oversight. Score honestly.

Bounded

The task has clear edges. Not 'improve the app', but one defined job.

1

2

3

4

5

Checkable result

Each step's outcome can be verified: a test passes, a total reconciles, a format matches.

1

2

3

4

5

Natural stopping point

There is a clear point where the goal is met and the agent should stop.

1

2

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Few consequential steps

The number of expensive or hard-to-undo steps run without a human is small.

1

2

3

4

5

Real fallback

When the agent gets stuck or errs, there is a defined handover, not silent failure.

1

2

3

4

5

Reading it: 20 or above, this is a sensible candidate. 13 to 19, narrow the task until it scores higher before building. Below 13, it is a demo task, not a production one. Redefine it or wait.

The compounding-reliability check

Reliability multiplies downward across steps. Estimate your per-step success rate, then see what it becomes across the whole task.

Per-step reliability	5 steps	10 steps	20 steps
99%	95%	90%	82%
95%	77%	60%	36%
90%	59%	35%	12%

Read the bottom-right corner. A 90%-per-step agent gets a 20-step task fully right about 12% of the time. This is why the teams that get value keep the number of consequential unsupervised steps small. It is structural, not a bug that will be patched.

Your task, mapped to the loop

Write your candidate task into the four moves. If you cannot fill 'observe' with something concrete, the result is not checkable and the task is not ready.

Perceive: what it reads

Decide: what it chooses

Act: what it does

Observe: how it knows it worked

Where to begin. Start narrow, keep a human at the consequential moments, make results checkable, and always have a fallback. Trust is earned by watching, not granted on day one.