



EXPLAINED CONSULTING

SCORE AI BOOTCAMP · PART 3

From Custom GPTs to Skills Teach AI How You Work

Custom GPTs are retiring. The skills you build carry forward. Leave knowing how to find a skill, try it safely and build your own.



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25+ years in enterprise technology and AI

WHERE WE ARE

A five-part series. **Today is Part 3.**

1

**Understand the
landscape**

Doug

2

Connect your tools

Elijah

3

**Build your own AI
assistant**

Today

4

**Agents that work
with customers**

Brian

5

Teams of agents

Nash

Today's promise: you leave knowing how to find a plugin, try it safely and build your own.



WHO I AM

From Technical Executive at Fortune 200 companies to SMB Advocate in Naperville



Built digital and AI programs for the U.S. Army, Harley-Davidson and USAA



Chief Architect at Leo Burnett. VP of Technology and AI practice lead at Critical Mass



Today: founder of Explained Consulting. AI for small businesses, built to fit how they already work



What we build: AI agents, agentic workflows and automation, like an AI front desk (Switchboard), local marketing (Atlas) and the back office (Ledger)

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WHAT'S CHANGING

Custom GPTs are retiring. Your instructions become skills.

Custom GPTs stop working on every ChatGPT plan. When you migrate one, its instructions become a skill.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENS
Sep 11, 2026	OpenAI announces Custom GPTs will retire across ChatGPT plans
Oct 26, 2026	Some Enterprise workspaces: no new Custom GPTs after this date
Dec 11, 2026	Standard retirement: GPTs and their pages stop working
Feb 11, 2027	Latest date, for Enterprise workspaces with an approved deferral

NOVEMBER 2023

Custom GPTs: **your own ChatGPT for one job**

Instead of pasting the same long prompt into every chat, you saved it once. No code required.

1

Instructions

How it should behave, in plain English.

2

Knowledge

Files it can read: price sheets, policies, FAQs.

3

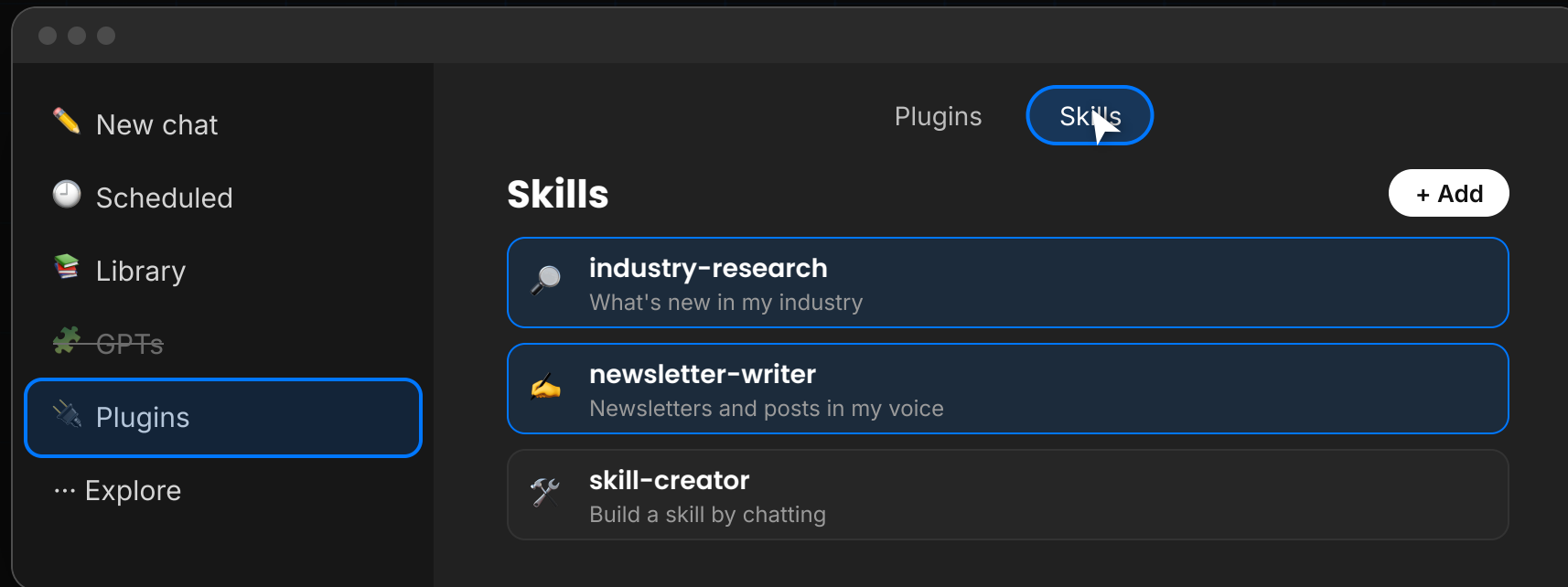
Actions

Calls out to other tools, set up by a developer.

Build it once. Share it with your team, or publish it in the GPT Store.

IN CHATGPT TODAY

GPTs are leaving. Skills live under Plugins.



Simplified view of ChatGPT: GPTs, Plugins, then the Skills tab

WHY THE CHANGE

The box changed. The skills carry over.

Custom GPT

One assistant, one job

Instructions

Knowledge files

⚡ Actions

needs a developer

RETIRING

Only in ChatGPT

Plugin

A toolbox for a role

SKILLS

Morning brief

Meeting prep

Follow-ups

REFERENCE FILES

Price sheet

Policies

APPS

Gmail

Calendar

QuickBooks

→ ChatGPT

→ Codex

→ Claude

SAME RECIPE, TWO PLATFORMS

ChatGPT and Claude both work this way now

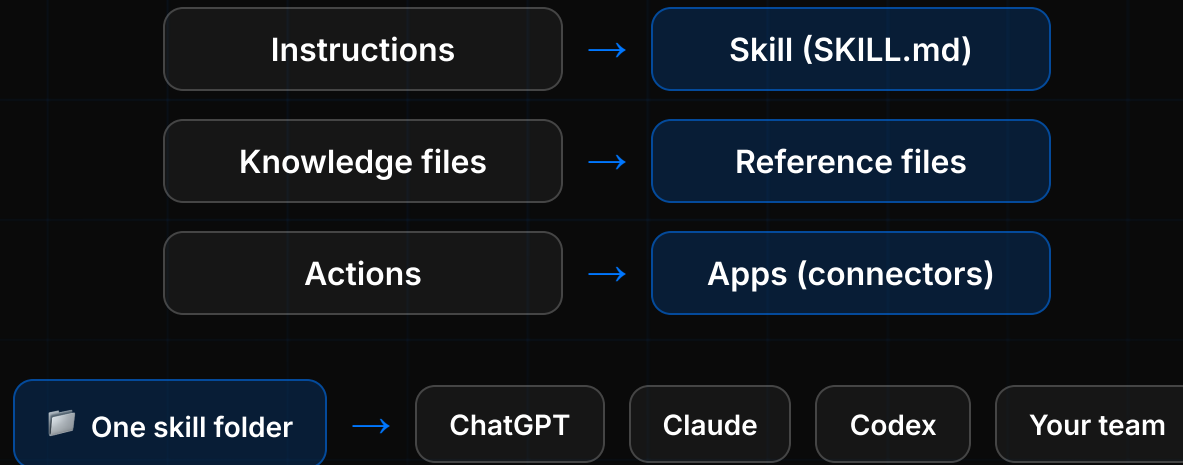
Both use a SKILL.md file with a name, a description and instructions.

	CHATGPT	CLAUDE
Find plugins	Plugins in the sidebar (chatgpt.com/plugins)	Customize, then Plugins, then Discover
Who gets them	Directory open across plans; some plugins vary by plan	Paid plans: Pro, Max, Team, Enterprise
Build by chatting	@plugin-creator	Plugin Create
Other ways to make a skill	Codex Record & Replay	Upload a skill folder, or record your screen (Mac)
Share with your team	Workspace tab and admin controls	Share menu on Team and Enterprise

WHY IT'S WORTH KNOWING

Build it once. Take it anywhere.

If you've built a Custom GPT, you already know how to build a skill.



A plain text folder you own. Copy it, share it, upload it wherever you work.

WHERE THINGS LIVE

Where should the **instruction** live?



Prompt

One request, typed every time



Memory

Facts about you



Project

Ongoing context and files



GPT / Agent

A specialist role



Skill

A reusable method for one job



Plugin

An installable box of skills and apps



App / MCP

A live connection to your tools

Skill = how

Your steps, your rules, your numbers, your format.

App = what it can reach

Gmail, Calendar, QuickBooks.

Plugin = the box

The box changes. The skills inside carry over.

THE NEW BUILDING BLOCKS

It all starts **with a skill**

PIECE	THINK OF IT AS	EXAMPLE
Skill	A training manual	"Write a quote using our price sheet"
App (connector)	The keys to your tools	Gmail, Google Calendar, QuickBooks, HubSpot
Plugin	A toolbox	Content Studio: research + newsletter writer + web search
Agent	An employee with a job description	Your newsletter draft is ready Monday at 7am

SKILLS, DEFINED

A skill is a playbook **for one job**

Written once. Used every time that job comes up.

1

It's a folder

A SKILL.md file with your steps, rules and format, plus reference files like a price sheet.

2

It loads when needed

AI reads only the name and description, then opens the rest when your request matches.

3

It works everywhere

The same file runs in Claude, ChatGPT and Codex. You own it.

ANATOMY OF A SKILL

The description is the **most important line**

The AI reads only the name and description until it decides the skill fits. Then it loads the rest.

- 1 **Name:** the job, in a few words
- 2 **Description:** when to use it. Claude caps it at 200 characters, so every word counts
- 3 **Steps:** what to do, in order
- 4 **Rules:** what never to do
- 5 **Output format:** the exact sections and length you want back
- 6 **Reference files:** your business context, like your industry, your readers or your writing samples
- 7 **One example:** a good output, so it knows what "good" looks like

WRITE THE DESCRIPTION

Bad vs. good description

BAD

"Helps with content."

GOOD

"Use when I ask what's new, what's going on in my industry or market, or for research for a post or newsletter. Finds this month's news and why it matters."

Why it matters

AI reads only the name and description until it decides a skill fits. A vague one never runs.

Say how you'd ask

Use the words you actually type: "what's new," "my industry," "my market."

Say what it does

And what it gives back: this month's news, and why it matters. Under 200 characters.

BEST PRACTICES

Start small. Start boring.

One job per skill

A skill that does too much gets confused. Two jobs?
Build two skills.

Pick a boring, weekly task

The jobs you repeat are the ones worth writing down.
Skip the moonshot.

Discrete and functional

One clear input, one clear result. You should know
when it's done.

Put your knowledge in files

Prices, policies, VIPs. The things AI can't guess.

Fix the output

Same sections, same length, every time. Show an
example.

Draft, don't send

Read-only first. A person approves anything that
goes out.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

A real skill: **industry-research**

name: industry-research

description: Use when I ask what's new, what's going on in my industry or market, or for research for a post or newsletter. Finds this month's news and why it matters.

Steps

1. Read config.md for my industry and my readers.
2. Search the web for news from the last 30 days in my industry.
3. Pick the 5 stories my readers would care about most.

Rules

- Every story needs a date and a working link. No link, drop it.
- Last 30 days only. No rumors. Research only.

Output

For each story: headline, date, link, and one line on why it matters to my readers.

LIVE DEMO 1

What AI does **without a skill**

1

Ask with no skill

"Write this week's newsletter."

2

See what you get

It guesses, or it asks: topic, audience, format?
Every single week.

3

Open the skill files

Two SKILL.md files, config.md and voice.md.
The answers, written once.

MAKE YOUR OWN

Four ways to create a skill

1

Write it yourself

Open a text file. Name, description, steps, rules, output.

2

Upload one

From a library or a colleague.
Read it, then Skills → Add.

3

Ask skill-creator

"Help me build a skill that..." It interviews you and writes the file.

4

Turn a chat into one

After a good session: "Can you turn what we just did into a skill?"

LIVE DEMO 2

Upload it. **Run it.**

1

Upload

Both folders: Plugins → Skills →
Add.

2

Three tests

"What's new in my industry?"
"Write this week's newsletter."
"Reply to this customer."

3

Swap the industry

Change one line to yours. Same
skill, new news.

4

New format

"Now make it a LinkedIn post."

If a test fails, fix the description first. It's almost always the culprit.

DOWNLOAD, DON'T BUILD

Free skill libraries **you can use today**

LIBRARY	WHAT'S IN IT	LINK
Anthropic Skills	Official. Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, brand guidelines, skill-creator	github.com/anthropics/skills
Anthropic Knowledge Work Plugins	Productivity, Small Business, Sales, Marketing, Support, Finance	github.com/anthropics/knowledge-work-plugins
Marketing Skills	Copywriting, SEO audit, cold email, pricing, social, ads	github.com/coreyhaines31/marketingskills
OpenAI Skills Catalog	PDF, transcription, Notion meeting notes. Built for Codex	github.com/openai/skills
Awesome Claude Skills	Curated list: documents, writing, business and app skills	github.com/ComposioHQ/awesome-claude-skills
Awesome Agent Skills	1,000+ skills. Works in Claude, ChatGPT/Codex and more	github.com/VoltAgent/awesome-agent-skills
skills.sh	Search every public skill, ranked by installs	skills.sh

Download the folder, read the SKILL.md, then upload it under Skills in Claude or ChatGPT.

WHAT PEOPLE BUILD

The 12 most common skills people make for themselves

Write like me

Your tone, phrases and banned words. Other skills use it

Email assistant

Drafts replies, summarizes long threads

Content repurposer

Research into a newsletter and post. We'll build this one

Blog and SEO writer

Outline, draft and keyword check

Editor

Checks drafts against your own checklist

Coach or tutor

Sales coaching, interview practice, training

Advisor

A sounding board for pricing and decisions

Meeting notes → actions

Transcript in, to-dos out

Proposal and quote writer

Your format, your price sheet

Customer replies

Answers from your policies and FAQ

Spreadsheet analyst

The same breakdown every week

Daily brief

What matters today, from your inbox and calendar

Not "an assistant." One narrow job, with your own material inside.

PLUGINS

Plugins give AI **your data and your tools**

Built by developers, often the software company itself. You install them. You don't build them.

Your data

Read your Gmail, calendar, QuickBooks or CRM.

Real actions

Draft an email, create an invoice, book a job.

Skills included

Many come with ready-made skills for that tool.

One click

Install, connect your account, done.

Your skills say how. Plugins give them something to work with.

SEARCH BEFORE YOU BUILD

10 plugins to try this week

PLUGIN OR CONNECTOR	WHERE	TRY THIS PROMPT	WHY IT MATTERS
Gmail or Outlook	Both	"Which customer emails need a reply today?"	Inbox triage in 30 seconds
Google Calendar	Both	"What does my week look like, and where am I double-booked?"	Week at a glance
Google Drive or Notion	Both	"Find our latest price sheet and summarize what changed."	Stop hunting for files
HubSpot	Both	"Which deals haven't been touched in 14 days?"	Pipeline that doesn't go stale
QuickBooks	Both	"Who owes us money past 30 days?"	Cash you can see
Canva	Both	"Turn this promo into 3 social posts sized for Instagram and Facebook."	Marketing without a designer
Claude for Small Business	Claude	"Chase my overdue invoices."	15 ready workflows across finance, sales and operations
Zendesk	ChatGPT	"Summarize this week's top support issues."	Support trends without reading every ticket
Data plugin	ChatGPT	"Break down last quarter's sales by service line."	Analysis without wrestling a spreadsheet
Plugin Creator / Plugin Create	Both	"Help me build a plugin that..."	The on-ramp to building your own

STAY SAFE

Three rules **before you click Connect**

1

Start read-only

Ask for summaries before you let it send anything.

2

Draft, don't send

A human hits send until you trust it.

3

Read what it can touch

Each plugin lists what it reads and what it can do.
Connect a work account, not your whole life.

LIVE BUILD

The **Content Studio**: two skills + Gmail



Skill 1: Industry Research

"What's new in my industry?" Five stories from the last 30 days, each with a date, a link and why it matters to my readers.



Skill 2: Newsletter Writer

"Write this week's newsletter." Turns the research into a newsletter or LinkedIn post in my voice. Runs research first if it needs to.



Reference files: config.md + voice.md

My industry, my readers, my newsletter name, my writing samples and the words I never use.



Connector: Gmail

"Put it in my Gmail drafts." The newsletter lands in your inbox, ready to read and send. Web search does the research.

Rules: no link, no story. Never invent facts or quotes. Draft only: it never sends or posts.

LIVE BUILD

Seven steps, 18 minutes

1

Ask with no skill

"Write this week's newsletter." It has to ask you four questions.

2 min

2

Open the two SKILL.md files

Name, description, steps, rules, output.

3 min

3

Add config.md and voice.md

The answers to those four questions.

2 min

4

Upload them

Skills in ChatGPT or Claude.

2 min

5

Run the three tests

Research only, both skills, neither.

4 min

6

Swap the industry

Change one line to the room's industry and rerun.

3 min

7

Same research, new format

"Now make it a LinkedIn post."

2 min

MAKE IT RUN ON ITS OWN

Put it on a schedule. **It gets done without asking.**



Monday, 7:00am



Research + 📧 newsletter skills run



Draft waiting in Gmail

Claude

Scheduled tasks: pick the time and how often, then type "Write this week's newsletter and put it in my Gmail drafts."

ChatGPT

Ask in a chat: "Every Monday at 7am, write this week's newsletter and put it in my Gmail drafts." Confirm the card. It lives under Scheduled in the sidebar.

Schedule only what you've tested. It drafts. You still hit send.

KNOW THE LIMITS

Where do-it-yourself stops

Answering the phone

That takes a voice agent, not a plugin.

Industry software

Field service and practice management tools with no connector.

Custom Actions

The ones that didn't survive the GPT migration.

Monitoring

Reliability, and fixing it when it breaks.

Team rollout

Getting everyone using it the same way.

Next up: **Part 4**, agents that work with your customers. **Part 5**, teams of agents.

DON'T WANT TO BUILD IT YOURSELF?

We build the skills. **You get an AI team.**



AI Receptionist

Never miss another call. Never pay overtime.



AI Office Manager

Your paperwork is done before you get to the office.



AI Marketing Manager

Every lead followed up. Every review collected.



AI Customer Care

Every customer checked on. Nobody forgotten.



AI Dispatcher

Every tech. Every job. Scheduled in real time.



AI Analyst

Know your numbers without hiring a numbers person.

THE GROUT MEDIC, NAPERVILLE

200+

APPOINTMENTS BOOKED

90

DAYS

NEXT STEPS

Questions?

Let's map your first skill.

Free 15-minute AI opportunity call

We'll find the skill or agent that saves you the most time.

Free starter pack

Today's research and newsletter skills, a morning-brief skill and the "10 to try" sheet. Email me and I'll send it.

 17 Book a free call



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Scan for the slides and PDF

THANK YOU

Write it once. Let it work every day.

1

Start small

One boring, weekly job.

2

Make it yours

Your rules, your numbers, your format.

3

Let it run

Test it, then put it on a schedule.

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