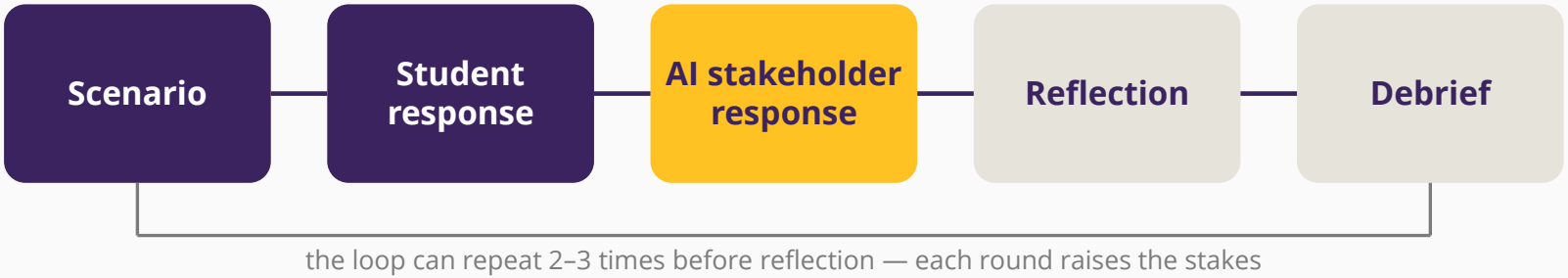
From static cases to AI role-play

Using chatbots to build judgment, practice, and reflection

Leave with: one role · one decision · one debrief question

THE CORE IDEA

A scenario partner, not an answer machine



The value isn't the chatbot. It's the **role, context, constraints, and debrief** you design around it.

You stay the teacher. The AI just plays the part.

Assess the reflection, not the chatbot conversation.

THE BUILD

Five steps — and the first one isn’t the prompt

1

Define the objective

Name what students must learn to do — then build the scenario around it.

2

Build the scaffold

Student role · AI role · facts · constraints · success criteria.

3

Write the prompt

So the bot holds its role consistently — and won’t solve the task for them.

4

Test & iterate

Before students touch it, check: Does it stay in role? Withhold the answer? Ask for reasoning?

5

Run + debrief

In class, with reflection, discussion, and clear expectations.

Start with what students need to practice — not with the prompt.

THE PROMPT

Prompt anatomy: what keeps the bot useful

ROLE	A specific part: client, patient, manager, regulator, customer, parent, or peer.
SITUATION	Enough complexity that the student has to exercise judgment.
BOUNDARIES	What it knows, what it withholds, and what it must never do.
BEHAVIOR	Asks follow-ups, applies realistic pressure, responds to the student's choices.
DEBRIEF	Summarizes choices, surfaces tradeoffs, asks reflection questions.

IT MUST NOT

- ✕ **Solve the assignment for them**
- ✕ **Hand over "the best answer"**
- ✕ **Grade students without you**

WORKED EXAMPLE · FINANCE

AI role: nervous investor. **Task:** explain why diversification matters in a downturn.

Bot pushes back: "I just lost money — why not move it all to cash?"

Debrief: what evidence let you respond without dismissing the fear?

WHY IT WORKS

Practice, feedback, and safe mistakes

Practice

Rehearse hard conversations, professional judgment, negotiation, diagnosis, advising — at a scale your office hours can't reach.

Feedback

Immediate, in-character response to each choice — low-stakes, and available on demand.

Reflection

Where the learning actually consolidates — paired with an instructor-led debrief.

IN PRACTICE

"Productive discomfort": a custom bot plays three executives who push back on the student's recommendation. **Bounded AI-as-adversary.**

Best use isn't recall — it's decision-making under uncertainty.

KEEP JUDGMENT IN THE LOOP

Green, yellow, red

GREEN **Go**	Simulate a role, ask follow-up questions, provide practice, and support reflection.
YELLOW **Verify**	Formative feedback is fine — but students verify claims, and you review the structure.
RED **Stop**	No private student data. No final grades. No replacing your feedback. No hallucinations passed off as fact.

The deeper risk isn't cheating — it's **shallow learning** when the bot makes the task too easy.

TRY IT NEXT WEEK

One role, one decision, one debrief

Pick one case

An existing case, scenario, or hard concept you already teach.

Name one decision

The single judgment call you want students to practice.

Build one AI role

Skeptical client · confused patient · budget-conscious CFO · worried parent · regulator.

RUN IT IN 30 MINUTES

Setup	Role-play	Reflection	Debrief
5 min	10 min	5 min	10 min

ASSESS THIS — NOT THE TRANSCRIPT

What did you decide? · What evidence did you use? · What did the role-play make you reconsider?

YOUR NEXT MOVE

Don’t start by asking

“How do I use AI in my class?”

Start by asking

“What does a student need to practice before they meet it for real?”

If it involves judgment, dialogue, ambiguity, pressure, or tradeoffs — a role-play is worth piloting.

The chatbot isn’t the learning evidence — **the student’s revised judgment is.**

Leave with one role, one decision, one debrief question — for one of your courses.

Build a no-code role-play bot with PlayLab.ai or your institution-approved AI platform.