



AGENTS OF CHANGE · AUGUST 2026

BUILD THE DECK

On-brand presentations, start to finish in Claude.



THE REALITY

There's no bonus prize for spending seven hours on a ten-minute task.



THE OLD WAY EATS YOUR WEEK

You already owe someone a deck

- A project update for your boss
- A partner update
- A campaign to promote
- An educational webinar
- A conference keynote



THE IDEA

One workflow builds them all.

— including this one.

SIX STEPS, SIX SKILLS



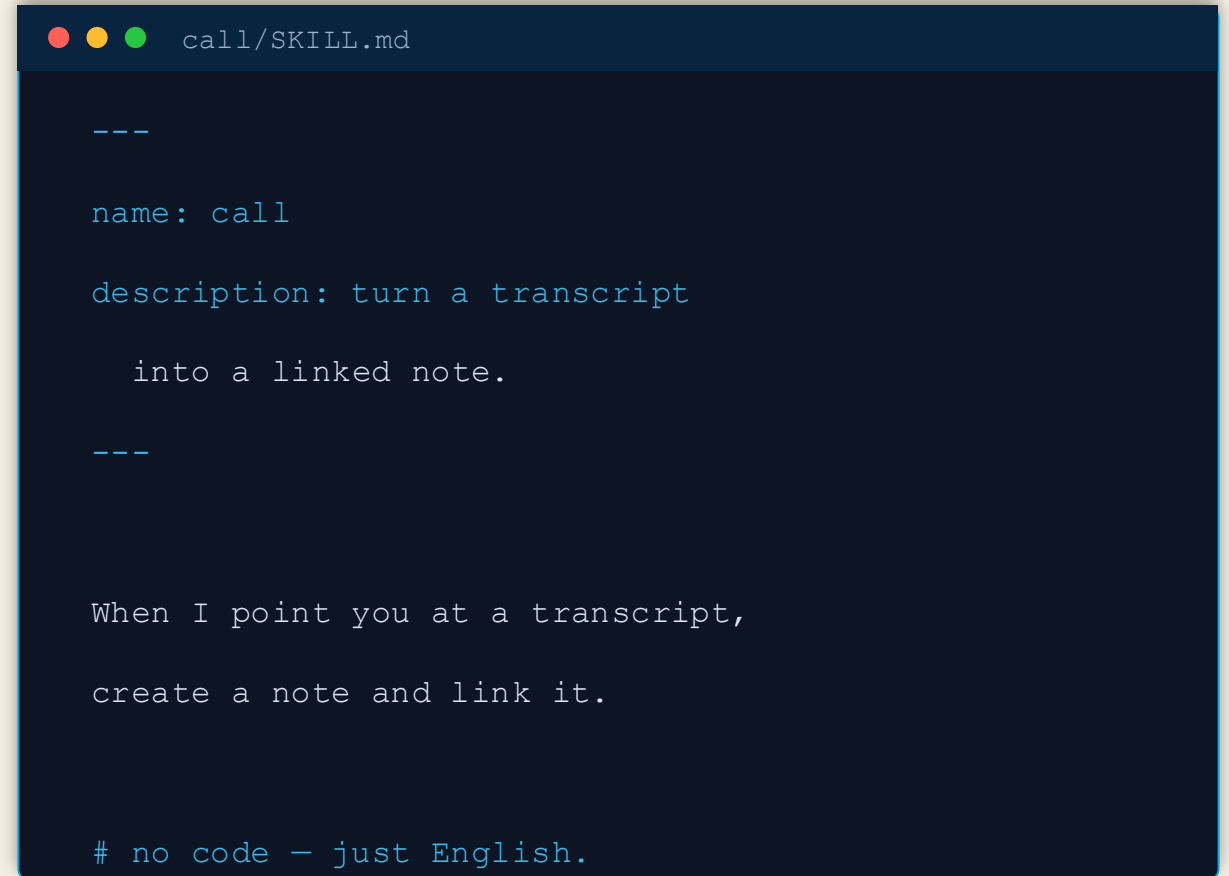
Each step is a skill. You chain them — the output of one is the input to the next.

THE ONE NEW WORD

A skill is a saved prompt you build once.

**Write the instructions for a task one time. Save it.
Now it's a command you run forever — /call,
/podium, build-pptx.**

No coding. A skill is a plain-text file of directions, written in English, that Claude follows every time.



```
---  
  
name: call  
  
description: turn a transcript  
            into a linked note.  
  
---  
  
When I point you at a transcript,  
  
create a note and link it.  
  
# no code — just English.
```

WHAT IT'S BUILT ON

build-pptx stands on Anthropic's PowerPoint skill.

Anthropic publishes a base skill that knows how to build PowerPoint. Your build-pptx skill sits on top and adds only your brand.

To copy this: drop the public pptx skill in your skills folder, then write a thin brand skill above it. You own the brand layer; Anthropic maintains the engine.

```
pptx/ (Anthropic base skill)

pptx/                (from Anthropic)
  pptxgenjs.md       how to build
  editing.md         how to edit
  qa/                how to check

build-pptx/          (yours, on top)
  SKILL.md           your brand rules
  fonts/  logos/
```

01

STEP 01

SPINE + BEATS

Decide what you're saying before Claude writes a single slide.

STEP 1 · THE SKILL

/writers-room — break the story first.

This runs first. It makes you decide the argument — while it's still cheap to change — before any slide exists.

New material always starts here. A slide outline is the wrong place to discover what you're trying to say.

writers-room/SKILL.md

```
name: writers-room
```

```
description: break a talk's
```

```
story BEFORE any deck.
```

```
HARVEST → idea cards
```

```
SPINE → pick 1 of 3 shapes
```

```
BEATS → one at a time
```

```
LEDGER → say each thing once
```

```
→ writes ## Talk Spine (Locked)
```



SPINE — THE PLOT

The one story your whole deck tells.

Bigger than a through-line — it's the shape the audience feels from open to close.

SPINES LOOK LIKE THIS

The main plot, in one move

- "AI as the car → then AI as the driver." (a shift)
- "Two lenses on the same destination."
- "Everything a machine can do becomes free — so your story is the asset."
- This deck: "the decks you owe → one workflow builds them all → make it yours."

Each is a plot, not a topic list. If you can't say it as one move, it's not a spine yet.

STEP 1 · THE RESULT

This deck's spine — the plot we're walking right now.

...Build-the-Deck_room.md

- Phase → SPINE. Three genuinely different ways to organize the hour. Each carries your featured steps (22–27) and both exhibits — they differ in *shape*.

SPINE A — "Watch This Deck Build Itself" (self-referential / meta)

Through-line: *"The slides you're watching right now were built with the exact workflow I'm about to show you."*

Reveal each featured step by pointing at how THIS deck used it; Virtuoso is the high-stakes callback ("same moves, a Bellagio keynote").

Shape: one self-referential spine — the artifact proves itself (the `slide_playbook` signature move).

Carries: 10★ (drives), 9★, 22–27, 34.

SPINE B — "Follow the Deck, Step by Step" (linear pipeline tour)

Through-line: *"Every good deck is the same six moves — break it, prep it, map it, build it, test it, track it."*

A straight march through steps 4→9; each shown on screen with its real instruction; Virtuoso + this deck appear as worked examples at each step.

Shape: linear tour; beats = the steps themselves.

Carries: 22–27 (the spine), 9, 10, 34.

SPINE C — "One Workflow, Every Deck You Owe Someone" (use-case-anchored)

Through-line: *"Board update, boss update, a pitch, a campaign — one workflow builds them all."*

Open on the four decks every partner owes someone; reveal the single pipeline behind all four; deep-dive the featured steps as the shared engine.

Shape: audience-problem-first, one-engine reveal.

Carries: 33 (drives), 22–27, 9, 10, 15, 16.

Pick one, hybridize (e.g., C's opening + A's meta spine), or ask for a 4th angle.

mmm they're all good. i thikn c is most useful to this audience, swap pitch to partner update, and then i think we go from starting wit hteh audience problem to spine b wehre we solve the problem step by step

BEATS — A THEATRE TERM

A beat is the smallest unit of dramatic action — one intention, one shift.

Your deck's beats are its moves: each one earns the next.

STEP 1 · BEATS START AS CANDIDATES

I pile them up, then mark the keepers

HARVEST — the card wall (● = real proof, ★ = your two exhibits)

React in shorthand: keep 3 7 · kill 4 · merge 2+5 · more like 7 · hm 9 (interesting, wrong shape) · spark: <new thought>

The Enemy

1. Template decks all look the same — sameness is the enemy.
2. ● "No bonus prize for 7 hours on a 10-minute task."
3. "Ditch PowerPoint for HTML" is dead — you keep the deck, just build it better.

The Workflow

4. The real work is the *thinking* (writers-room); slides are just output.
5. ● Two skills chained: writers-room breaks the argument → build-pptx makes a real, editable .pptx.
6. Brand baked in — colors, fonts, logos auto-applied; on-brand by default.
7. ● "It's the harness, not the model."
8. ● "A skill is just a saved prompt you build once."

The Proof (exhibits)

9. ●★ Exhibit A: the Virtuoso Bellagio deck — built this exact way.
10. ●★ Exhibit B (meta): *this webinar's own deck* — "what you're watching was built this way."
11. ● Exhibit C standby: the Conversation-to-Knowledge deck (34 slides, same workflow).
12. ● "~30% of Brand USA board slides are now AI-generated."
13. ● Kat updates the skill once; every future deck inherits it.
14. ● Allie asked to co-build a template→deck pipeline after one demo.

For You

15. Do this with *your* destination's brand guidelines.
16. The taste travels: Story slides win, Named Concepts capped at 3.
17. ● "Making PowerPoints, it's through this tool — that's already how I work."
18. Presentations-as-code is coming; the .pptx is the on-ramp.

Gut-react — what's alive?

STEP 1 · HOW THE BEATS GOT BUILT

We built them one at a time — I reacted, edited, approved.

writers-room · working session

- Phase → BEATS. Building them one at a time. Here's the opener.

BEAT 1 of ~8 — "The Four Decks You Owe Someone"

CLAIM — You already owe someone a deck this month — a board update, a boss update, a partner update, or a campaign — and it's the same workflow every time. *(said here, only here)*

PROOF — ● The workflow's range is proven at both ends: *this very webinar deck* (card 10) and the *Virtuoso Bellagio keynote* (card 9) came off the identical pipeline.

MOMENT — Audience check: "Which of these four are you building this week? Drop it in the chat." Then, gesturing at the screen: "This presentation is one of those decks too — and you're about to watch how it got built."

HANDOFF — "It always starts the same place — with the argument, before a single slide. Step one." → Beat 2 (writers-room)

ALT — open cold on card 2 ("no bonus prize for 7 hours on a 10-minute task") as a why-bother hook *before* the four decks.

React (`keep` / tweak the claim / `more` / `spark:`) and I'll lock it and move to Beat 2.

There's no chat, so we don't need to say drop it in the chat. But I like the sharing that this presentation is one of those decks. As well, I don't know that every deck starts with an argument. Does it? Does the writer's room set up an argument? If anything, I'd change it to thesis. But I don't know what that has to do with the board deck or any of these other updates. I think I would skip that. But I do like the no bonus prize for seven hours on a ten-minute task.

STEP 1 · THE BEAT SHEET FOR THIS DECK

The moves you're walking through, in order

- 1 The decks you owe someone
- 2 Spine + beats `/writers-room`
- 3 Anticipate what they need `/keynote prep`
- 4 Turn it into slides `/keynote deck`
- 5 Build it, on-brand `build-pptx`
- 6 Get a second opinion `/advisory`
- 7 Never lose track `/podium`
- 8 Make it yours

These eight beats ARE this presentation — you're inside it right now.

02

STEP 02

ANTICIPATE WHAT THEY NEED

Draft the questions your audience will ask — and answer them on the slides.

STEP 2 · THE SKILL

/keynote prep — get ready for the room.

"They" is your audience. The skill lists what THEY will want to know — then you make sure each answer lands on a slide.

Not defense against hard questions — anticipation of real needs, built into the deck before anyone has to ask.

```
keynote/SKILL.md (prep)

# keynote prep

From the topic + who's in the
room, draft:

· the questions they'll ask

· talking points per beat

· the answers, in your voice

→ so nothing catches you cold.
```

Who's listing what? The skill is.

- It reads your topic and who will be in the room
- It drafts the questions your audience is likely to have
- You check each one is answered on a slide — or add one

STEP 2 · THE RESULT

The questions your audience has — each given a home on a slide.

What they'll wonder	Answered on a slide
"Is this only for keynotes?"	the five everyday decks
"Do I have to code?"	a skill is plain English
"What about MY brand?"	brand, baked in
"Is the AI actually good at it?"	scored 8.4 / 10
"Where do I even start?"	this week

The prep skill drafts these from your topic + who's in the room; you make sure each has a slide.

03

STEP 03

TURN IT INTO SLIDES

Spine + beats become a plain-text blueprint.

STEP 3 · THE SKILL

/keynote deck — map beats to slides.

It doesn't design anything yet. It decides what each slide says and does — the blueprint the builder will follow.

One beat becomes one to three slides. The moment drives the type, not the other way around.

keynote/SKILL.md (deck)

```
# keynote deck
```

```
Take the locked spine and turn  
each beat into 1-3 slides.
```

```
Pick the slide TYPE from the  
beat's moment — story, concept,  
code, stat.
```

```
→ a blueprint, no design yet.
```

STEP 3 · THE RESULT

The blueprint — plain text, before a pixel of design.

keynote deck · outline

Slide 27 build-pptx — the skill

- Type: Code (split)
- Content: show SKILL.md + explain the base
- Source: build-pptx/SKILL.md

Slide 32 Brand, baked in

- Type: Brand board
- Content: color swatches + fonts + logo

One line of plan becomes one finished slide.

The blueprint is the contract. What you approve in plain text is what gets built — no surprises at design time.

This is why you review the outline, not the slides: fixing a word is free; re-cutting a designed deck is not.

blueprint line

```
### Slide 5

- Type: Named Concept

- Content: "One workflow
           builds them all."

- Tag: "- including this one."

(→ becomes slide 5, exactly)
```

STEP 3 · THE TASTE RULES

Where the good taste lives — a rules file the skill reads.

These rules are MINE — written from what landed and what flopped across dozens of my decks. They live in a markdown file the builder reads.

To make your own: start a rules file, and after each talk add what worked. Your taste, versioned — borrow mine to begin, then outgrow it.

slide_playbook.md

```
# Slide Playbook
```

```
Story slides win.
```

```
Named Concepts: 3 per deck, max.
```

```
Say each claim once.
```

```
No triads everywhere.
```

```
Full-bleed image  $\geq$  1.6 aspect.
```

```
(the skill reads this every build)
```

04

STEP 04

BUILD IT, ON-BRAND

One skill turns the blueprint into a real, editable PowerPoint.



THE PAYOFF

Real, editable PowerPoint.

Your brand — colors, fonts, logo — applied automatically.

STEP 4 · THE SKILL

build-pptx — the engine, on your brand.

This is the only step that writes the file. It borrows Anthropic's build engine and layers your brand on top.

You never touch a hex code or drag a logo — the skill does it the same way every single time.

```
build-pptx/SKILL.md

name: build-pptx

description: branded .pptx

for Brand USA.

Reads the base pptx skill for
mechanics; adds:

· brand colors

· Oswald + Montserrat

· logo on every slide
```

What it declares.

● ● ● build-pptx/SKILL.md

```
name: build-pptx
```

```
description: Create branded PPTX for any
```

```
Brand USA brand – detects brand, plans the  
blueprint, generates the .pptx.
```

```
# Always read first:
```

1. this skill (brand rules, fonts, logos)
2. the base pptx skill (build mechanics)

It reads your blueprint.

● ● ● build-pptx/SKILL.md

```
# Step 2 · Analyze content, build outline
```

```
For each slide the blueprint names:
```

- pick the layout from the moment
- pull the real stat / quote / code
- decide light vs. dark for rhythm

```
Content leads. Design serves it.
```

It applies your brand.

● ● ● build-pptx/SKILL.md

```
# Brand rules (non-negotiable)
```

```
NAVY 101F36 · CYAN 00A9E0 · USA 00549F
```

```
Oswald headlines (UPPERCASE)
```

```
Montserrat body
```

```
Wordmark logo on EVERY slide
```

```
    white on dark · full-color on light
```

```
never type the wordmark — always the logo
```

It writes each slide type.

build-pptx/SKILL.md

```
# Step 3 · Build (chunks of 4 slides)

slide = pptx.addSlide()

addStory() addNamedConcept() addStepDivider()

addCodeWindow() addTable() ...


# Step 4 · QA every slide, then deliver .pptx
```

BRAND, BAKED IN



NAVY

#101F36



CYAN

#00A9E0



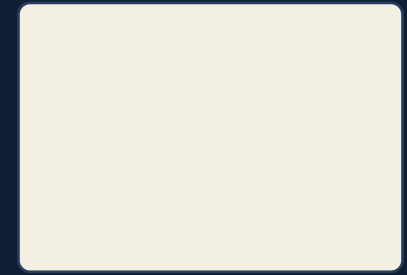
USA BLUE

#00549F



SLATE

#4C5768



CREAM

#F4EFE3

Oswald

HEADLINES, UPPERCASE

Montserrat

body copy, every day

Update once — every deck inherits it.

- Your brand changes? Edit one rules file
- Every future deck picks it up automatically
- No more fixing colors across a hundred old files

STEP 4 · WHEN AN IMAGE HELPS

The skill has Gemini API access — and decides on its own.

In this step

build-pptx can call Google Gemini directly. It judges when a slide wants an image, writes the prompt itself, and drops the result in — no stock-photo hunt.

Here's a real prompt it wrote:

```
build-pptx → gemini prompt

# build-pptx → gemini-3.1-flash

prompt = (

    "A photorealistic bald eagle in a

    tiny navy business suit at a podium,

    presenting a glowing PowerPoint to

    a boardroom of golden retrievers

    in blazers, dramatic corporate

    lighting, 85mm lens, 16:9"

)
```



...and this is what came back. (Global Avian Enterprises, Q4 predator-prey dynamics.)

STEP 4 · IT CHECKS ITSELF

The checks we built in — run before it ships.

This works because we wrote a series of checks together. They live beside the skill and run at the end of every build.

Integrity, logo present, no typed wordmark, images sized right — the deck proves itself before you send it.

```
build-pptx/qa.js

# after every build:

unzip -t deck.pptx          # not corrupt

grep the wordmark as text   # must be EMPTY

assert logo on every slide

assert image aspect fits layout


# fails loud — you never ship a

# broken or off-brand file.
```

BUILD IT TWO WAYS

EASIEST — IN COWORK

- 1 Screenshot the skill.
- 2 Paste it: "build me this skill."
- 3 Click Save skill.
- 4 Type the command — it's live.

IF THAT ERRORS — DROP THE FILE

- 1 Make a folder in ~/.claude/skills/
- 2 Paste the file, save as SKILL.md
- 3 Same command — no build step to fail.

05

STEP 05

GET A SECOND OPINION

A panel scores the deck and tells you exactly what to fix.

STEP 5 · THE SKILL

/advisory — a board of expert personas.

Five presentation experts, as AI personas, review the deck independently and score it — before your real audience does.

You revise against the notes and run it again, until the composite clears the bar.

advisory/SKILL.md

```
# advisory presentations
```

```
Spawn expert reviewers in  
parallel — Duarte, Gallo,  
Hogshead, Heath, Brown.
```

```
Each scores 1-10 + notes.
```

```
Composite must clear 8.0.
```

```
→ REVISE or APPROVED
```

STEP 5 · WHO'S ON THE BOARD

Each reviewer is a file — a real point of view.

The board is five presentation experts, each written as a persona file with its own lens and scoring rubric.

Duarte scores the story arc. Gallo, the spoken hook. Hogshead, what's memorable. You can add your own experts.

```
personas/nancy_duarte.md

name: Nancy Duarte

lens: audience resonance —

    is there a gap between

    what-is and what-could-be?

rubric:

    story arc

    audience = the hero

    ends on a 'new bliss'
```

STEP 5 · THE NOTES — AND WHAT I CHANGED

They don't just rate it. They tell you what to fix.

The note they gave	What I changed
Duarte: the last act still belongs to you, not the audience	Gave the final section to the audience's win
Hogshead: spike a slide early — the biggest lift in the deck	Moved the hook up to slide 2
Brené: name the fear out loud	Added a slide: "Will AI replace you?"
Heath: put the actions on a slide; stage the demo	So no one rebuilds it from memory

Real notes from this deck's round 1 — and the exact edits that moved it from 7.4 to 8.4.

STEP 5 · THE RESULT

Round 1 said revise. Round 2 approved.

Reviewer	R1	R2	Δ
Nancy Duarte	7.7	8.7	+1.0
Carmine Gallo	7.0	7.7	+0.7
Sally Hogshead	7.7	8.7	+1.0
Chip Heath	7.0	8.0	+1.0
Brené Brown	7.7	8.7	+1.0
Composite	7.4	8.4	+1.0

Threshold 8.0 — round 2 cleared it. The revisions came straight from the round-1 notes.

06

STEP 06

NEVER LOSE TRACK

One view of every deck you owe — and how ready each one is.

STEP 6 · THE SKILL

/podium — your 90-day deck slate.

It scans your engagements and rolls them into one view every Monday — the deck due Thursday that's still a skeleton shows up in red.

The same workflow that builds a deck also keeps the whole slate honest.

podium/SKILL.md

```
# podium
```

```
List every talk in the next 90  
days. For each, show:
```

- days out
- how ready it is
- what's still missing

STEP 6 · IN ACTION

The real rollup — days out, how ready, what’s left.

Podium ran — added to the agenda. The 90-day pipeline:

When	Engagement	State
7/16 (9d)	Mindtrip: Mining the Gap	in progress, blocked on Michelle's run-of-show (PTO)
8/3 (27d)	Build the Deck	skeleton — your early-start target
8/9 (33d)	Virtuoso	near-ready: deck v3 built, advisory rd 3, ✈ travel booked (JFK→LAS 8/7, back 8/10)
9/21 (76d)	WV Governors	skeleton, travel unbooked

(Mississippi 10/7, ATIA 10/14, AITC 10/19 are logged but just past the 90-day line.)

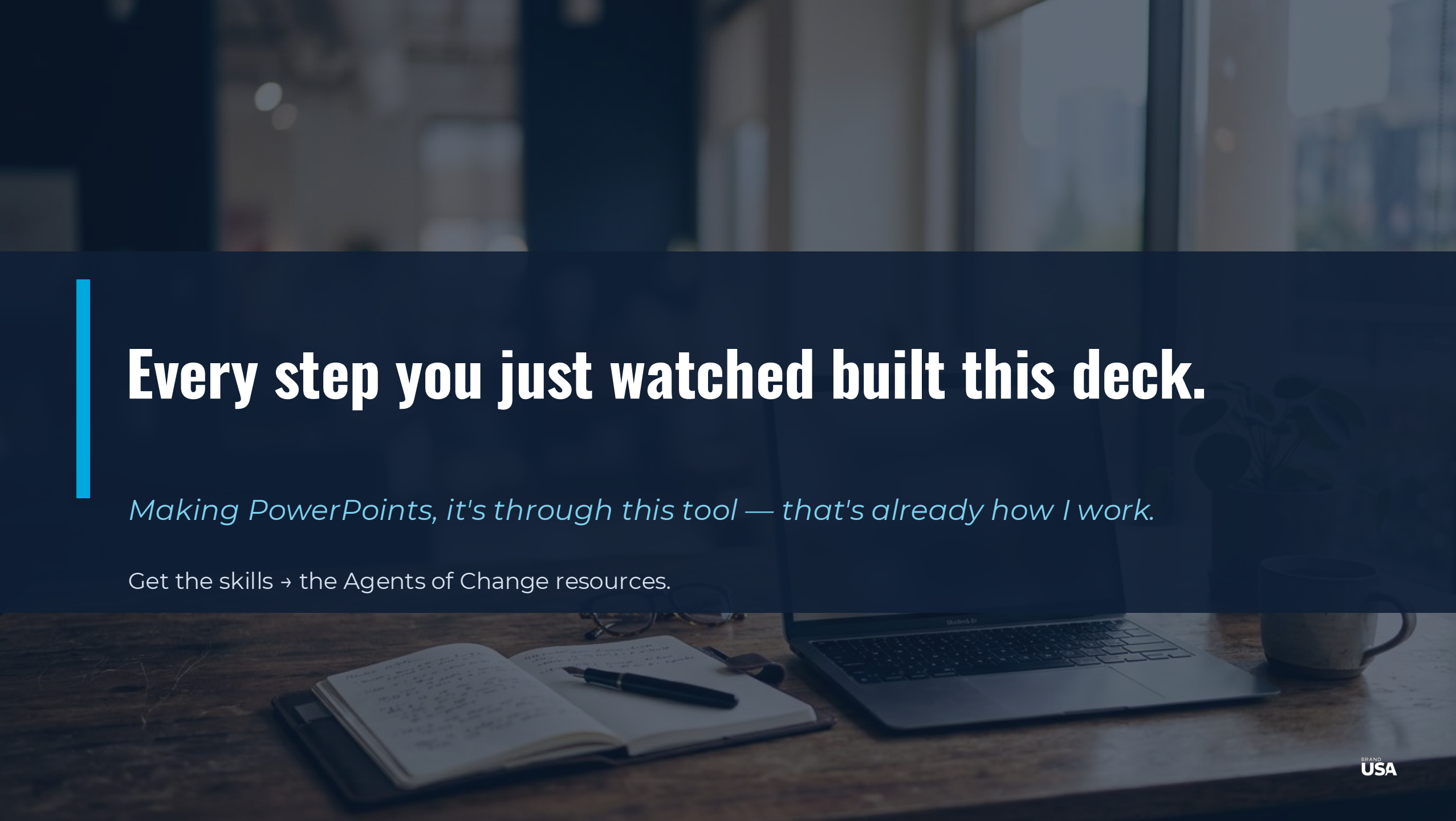
For getting Build the Deck slides done early — the smart move: this webinar *shows* finished decks rather than building live, and **your Virtuoso v3 deck is the perfect exhibit** (it was built with the exact workflow you're demoing). So the path is: lock a run-of-show → pick 1–2 finished decks to showcase → build only a short framing deck at the end.

Want me to kick that off now — run `/keynote prep Build the Deck` to draft the run-of-show and segment plan? Since it's a workflow demo rather than a new argument, I'd skip `/writers-room` unless you want a stronger narrative spine around it. Your call on which.

Everything you owe, with the gaps showing — and a quiet nod to the partners whose rooms these are.

The same six steps — on your terms.

- Point it at your own destination's brand guidelines
- Write your own rules file; grow it after each talk
- Pick the next deck you owe — and break its spine first



Every step you just watched built this deck.

Making PowerPoints, it's through this tool — that's already how I work.

Get the skills → the Agents of Change resources.