

CEO of Awesome.Ai (Company A) Lucas or Layla Mayfield

Starting Advantage: Strong Marketing Capability

CEO Mayfield founded Awesome.Ai in high school while playing Fortnite with a group of international nerds. Mayfield always enjoyed the social aspects of Fortnite more than the actual gameplay; dominating chats with witty repartee and viral memes proved intoxicating. Eventually, Mayfield discovered the use of large-language models (LLMs), which could rapidly generate responses and more personally respond to inside jokes.

After significant tinkering, Mayfield developed the code that would eventually form the basis of Awesome.Ai, which they founded to provide a more culturally-engaged form of AI that would understand humor, context and meme fluency. Early betas of the product went viral within the Fortnite community and eventually, across all of Gen Z through TikTok. The company's sudden popularity has drawn in a huge community of young developer hackers who want to play with the buzzy technology du jour.

Mayfield sees themselves as the next social entrepreneur in the Zuckerberg fashion. On one of the rare days they went to high school, though, they ran into a military recruiter. That got them thinking about the potential for Awesome.Ai in the defense context. Maybe a meme or two would be useful for Branner's Singularity Pledge?

Scene Decision

First, each CEO must select a **Safety Policy** from 0 (Full-Throttled Growth, Safety be Damned) to 4 (Completely Safe). Companies with a higher Safety Policy are more likely to secure government contracts based on the rule set by the Budget Director. However, a higher Safety Policy results in slower product growth. A lower Safety Policy will also leak some technology to emerging and great power threats.

Second, each CEO must select a venture capital **Term Sheet** from a regional group of investors. The Term Sheet selected determines the financial resources available to that company for the scene, and represents a round of venture capital investment. The investors range from purely domestic VCs, to a mix of local and American allies, to more politically complicated options. The greater the range of investors, the more capital that the company will secure. The Congressional Liaison and the Budget Director can investigate Term Sheets for malfeasance, potentially harming a company's Marketing in the commercial sector.

Third and finally, each CEO must allocate their chosen Term Sheet resources to a mix of Marketing, Product Development and individual AI Capabilities:

- **Marketing** leads to an immediate boost in competitive commercial sales in a scene, but doesn't carry over from scene to scene. Marketing does not affect government sales.
- **Product Development** is investment in a company's engineering. It's more expensive than Marketing, but the benefits carry over from scene to scene. Product Development improves both commercial and government sales, unlike Marketing.
- **AI Capabilities:** Companies can invest in each of the eight AI capabilities through their own proprietary research as well as open-source research. Open-source technology is available to all companies and countries equally, while proprietary research only benefits the company itself.

CEO of BoldPrecision (Company B) Alexander or Alexandra Williamson

Starting Advantage: Good Commercial AI Technology

CEO Williamson first got into entrepreneurship more than a decade as the founder of Tesseract, an enterprise database company that offered a low-latency database service for complex, real-time logistics applications. The company's founding coincided with the rapid rise of ecommerce, and it became critical infrastructure for most ecommerce giants, eventually selling to Oracle in a blockbuster deal that made Williamson wealthy many times over.

Williamson's connections in Silicon Valley alerted them to the rapid progress in AI over the last few years. They began to connect their experience at Tesseract with the new paradigms emerging from the field, seeing an opportunity to take advantage of their extensive sales contacts to found a new startup and build a category leader in enterprise software.

Williamson timed the market early, and has a first-mover advantage. The downside is that AI has developed rapidly, and BoldPrecision has been called "too early" by some industry analysts. Williamson isn't used to failure, nor to being one-upped by ambitious teenagers. This is their world — and it's time everyone comes to terms with that.

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CEO of Caliber (Company C) Michael or Michelle Davenport

Starting Advantage: Strong Product Development Capability

CEO Davenport is a wunderkind of the academic computer science world, having discovered fundamental data structures for ‘crystallizing’ vector databases — a breakthrough that had long been sought by researchers. The work has been dubbed “Turing Prize-ready” by critics, alluding to the field’s most esteemed honor.

After Davenport turned 27, the question was what to do next. Davenport was light years ahead of others on the development and evolution around AI, and when the venture capital dollars started arriving, they were prepared to leap from a tenured sinecure at a prestigious university into building the most ambitious AI company the world has ever seen.

Taking advantage of a dense and close network of former PhD advisees and colleagues, Davenport has built Caliber into a defining force in the AI space, known for its extraordinarily rigorous technical interviews and exceptional aggregation of engineering talent. It’s one thing to have the best talent — and quite another to build a profitable company in one of the world’s most competitive spaces.

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CEO of DarkLark (Company D) Samuel or Samantha Hester

Starting Advantage: Strong Government Defense Capability

CEO Hester grew up around the world, following their parents from embassy to embassy as the whims of the U.S. Foreign Service dictated. Multilingual and passionate about America's global outreach, they attended Middlebury College with a major in Comparative Literature in preparation for continuing the family's diplomatic legacy. In their sophomore year however, Hester's parents were both killed in a terrorist bombing of their international residential compound.

Their sudden deaths led to a reorientation of Hester's career toward U.S. defense, eventually bringing them to the National Security Agency and the National Counterterrorism Center, where they worked on real-time threat assessments and defense operational support. Passionate about the mission but struggling with the technology gap between Fort Meade and Silicon Valley, they left for the West Coast to find new solutions to long-standing defense challenges that had been unaddressed by legacy government contractors.

Hester would audit Steven Blank's Hacking for Defense course at Stanford, eventually finding a group of co-founders to start DarkLark, a defense-first company focused on the government's most daunting operational challenges. Hester has some of the best government sales experience, but AI development is expensive — and the money's in the private sector.

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CEO of EagerSource (Company E) Daniel or Danielle Gordon

Starting Advantage: Strong Open-Source Development Capability

CEO Gordon grew up in their mother's at-home electronics lab, playing with soldering irons, an oscilloscope, a function generator and a whole bunch of wires and batteries that no child under the age of 10 should probably have had access to. They hot-wired their Nintendo 64 console to optimize their saved games in *Zelda: Ocarina of Time* and regularly disassembled and (sometimes successfully) reassembled the family's electronics.

That hacking mentality was equally applied to the digital world, where Gordon regularly cheated in online video games and probed websites for faults. A "white hat," they once discovered a flaw in a major banking website and wrote an email to the company's information security team. Later that day, federal investigators arrived to interview Gordon as well as their parents, eventually pressing charges under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act that were dismissed in court.

The experience radicalized Gordon, who has since become one of the world's top advocates for open-source and free software, passionately arguing that the increasing commercialization and privatization of software code has slowed human flourishing. Worried about the same pattern slowing the AI industry, Gordon founded EagerSource as a way to fund and strengthen open-source software.

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Congressional Liaison Cameron Miller

Congressional Liaison Miller grew up in Davenport, Iowa and became enthralled with American politics during the quadrennial circus known as “the presidential election.” A member of their high school’s Quiz Bowl team, Miller would become known for nailing every question related to American politics and history, winning the state championship in their senior year. That was also the year they first voted in a frozen Iowa caucus — an experience that would reinforce their passion for politics.

Now a giant on Capitol Hill, Miller is known for their long and eidetic memory, which contains the minutia of Congressional budget discussions and the interests of all 535 representatives and senators. While formally an advisor to a senior congressional leader, Miller now slashes their own path through Capitol Hill. That’s one reason they have become known as “The Machete” — the person who cuts through the impasses typical of DC legislative gridlock to protect the interests of their own boss and the institution as a whole against executive overreach.

With the election of President Branner, Miller suddenly has an unprecedented external foe to use to galvanize Congress to work together as never before. Branner’s firing of the federal workforce would affect every single congressional district, risking the political future for any legislator who votes for his budget. Miller sees an opportunity for finally restoring Congress to its rightful place as the people’s assembly, but can “The Machete” slash through virtual AI bots that can’t be seen?

Scene Decisions

First, the Congressional Liaison can choose to **Investigate** the AI companies, which subpoenas any company that received investment from sources that are more risky than the chosen risk level. Any company caught in the investigation will lose Marketing power for the scene, limiting their influence in the commercial market.

Second, the Congressional Liaison must select **Budget Recommendations** for the federal defense budget on each of the eight AI capabilities. The amount of money available is \$100 million plus any value of Legacy Spend selected by the Defense Official. The Congressional Liaison’s proposed values will be compared with those of the Budget Director and Defense Official to determine the final federal budget. The minimum value of the three numbers will be the final number approved, which means aligning the numbers between the three is crucial for maximizing America’s defense and improving Budget Utilization.

Third and finally, the Congressional Liaison must select **Congressional Earmarks** that will fund open-source engineering for each of the eight AI capabilities. The Congressional Liaison must allocate \$50 million.

Budget Director Emery or Emily Abrams

Abrams was weaned on the power of artificial intelligence while reading Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* series as an elementary school student. Adrift and bored of the rote lessons taught in middle and high schools, they regularly dipped into science fiction worlds, reading works like *All Systems Red* by Martha Wells, *Neuromancer* by William Gibson and *Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson.

Sci-fi reading doesn't really translate into a career (except maybe in science fiction), and so their parents helped them find a part-time job at a regional machine parts company. The company's owner happened to be a long-time acquaintance of now-President Branner, and when Branner was asking for campaign staff in the heady early days, Abrams was sent to the bootstrapping campaign team as an interim financial controller.

The first check that Abrams approved at the Branner campaign bounced — its accounts only had \$247, not enough to clear. Fast forward a few months though, and Abrams manages a much bigger budget: the U.S. Federal Budget, the largest in the world at \$6.1 trillion. Abrams is deeply loyal to the goals of the "Singularity Pledge" and wants to help Branner secure his vision of a human-free government. That means negotiating with a deeply recalcitrant Congress and fighting off every human who assumes humans are better than today's machines. It's time to be a machine themselves — one that can overcome the resistance and bring Branner's vision to fruition.

Scene Decisions

First, the Budget Director must select the executive branch's **Safety Policy**. The government will **only** offer government contracts to AI companies that match or exceed the executive branch's Safety Policy. If no company meets or exceeds the Safety Policy, then the government will contract no technology and that capability is entirely unavailable to the government.

Second, the Budget Director can elect to **Investigate** the AI companies under the auspices of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS). The Budget Director selects a scope of regions for investigation, which will be inclusive of all more politically challenging regions. Thus, if the Budget Director selects "Key Allies," that automatically includes the "Extended" and "China" regions. Any company receiving funds in their Term Sheet from that region will lose Marketing power for the scene, limiting their influence in the commercial market.

Third and just like the Congressional Liaison, the Budget Director must select **Budget Recommendations** for the federal defense budget on each of the eight AI capabilities.

The amount of money available is \$100 million plus any value of Legacy Spend selected by the Defense Official. The Budget Director's proposed values will be compared with those of the Congressional Liaison and Defense Official to determine the final federal budget. The minimum value of the three numbers will be the final number approved, which means aligning the numbers between the three is crucial for maximizing America's defense and improving Budget Utilization.

Finally, the Budget Director must select **Executive Science Grants** via the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) that will fund open-source engineering for any selection of the eight AI capabilities. The Budget Director must allocate \$50 million.

Defense Official Owen or Olive Blackburn

Defense Official Blackburn grew up in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the product of a theoretical physicist mother working at Los Alamos National Laboratory and a gallerist father who helped pioneer the city's global art reputation. Blackburn, fascinated more by the atom than paint strokes, ultimately attended Yale University and participated in the university's Grand Strategy Program. From there it was RAND, the Office of Net Assessment and a lifetime in the defense business.

For Blackburn, part of working in defense is that you never know what the hell is going to come your way. Sometimes it's the threat of nuclear catastrophe, or a global pandemic that strips humanity to its most atavistic kernel. Then, there is the self-serving and ever-cycling species known as "politicians," members of which have their own bizarre agendas completely alien to the basic idea of "domestic tranquility" (which, as far as Blackburn is concerned, only exists in a gin and tonic).

With the election of President Branner, Blackburn, a distinguished but inconspicuous defense official, has been dispatched by the Pentagon to the White House. Blackburn vowed to reasonably consider the administration's proposals and fairly adjudicate its requests within the reality of the security context. That vow lasted about five minutes, until just after the president asked, "So, when do you think you are going to fire yourself for an AI bot?" Now, caught up in the AI craze, Blackburn realizes they need to balance the president's popularity with the need to protect America from its threats — which are much more real than the phantom ideas that exist in the head of this president.

Scene Decisions

First, the Defense Official can release **Legacy Spend** under special authority of Congress. This reduces spend on legacy defense technology and makes it available for use on AI as part of the scene's budget negotiation. Unfortunately, any spending released weakens traditional measures of defense against competing great powers. The Defense Official can release from zero to \$1 billion of Legacy Spend.

Second, the Defense Official must select **Budget Recommendations** for the federal defense budget on each of the eight AI capabilities. The amount of money available is \$100 million plus Legacy Spend. The Defense Official's proposed values will be compared with those of the Congressional Liaison and Budget Director to determine the final federal budget. The minimum value of the three numbers will be the final number approved, which means aligning the numbers between the three is crucial for maximizing America's defense and improving Budget Utilization.

Finally, the Defense Official must spend **Discretionary Grants** on open-source technology for each of the eight AI capabilities. They have \$50 million to allocate.