ACROSS THE TABLE

BUSINESS CONSULTING

BUSINESS JOB 01 · EPISODE 1

ChatGPT vs Claude vs Perplexity

Three general AI assistants, what each one is actually for, and which to open first

Knowledge Article 01

AI Stack Series · acrossthetable.biz

© 2026 Across the Table Business Consulting · acrossthetable.biz · All Rights Reserved

THE JOB THESE THREE DO

All three of these are assistants you talk to by typing. You ask a question or describe a problem in your own words, and they answer. You can argue with them, ask them to try again, or tell them to explain it more simply.

They overlap a great deal. Any of the three will draft an email, summarise a document or help you think through a decision. That is why choosing between them confuses people — on the surface they look identical.

They are not identical. Each one is built around a different main job, and once you know what that job is the choice becomes obvious.

WHO EACH ONE IS

ChatGPT — the general one

Made by a company called OpenAI. This is the one most people have heard of, and the one most businesses end up using as their everyday assistant.

What it is: a general assistant — writing, analysis, research, and with its Agent mode, multi-step work it carries out for you.

Best for: your default thinking partner when you want one tool that does most jobs well.

Watch out for: it sounds confident when it is wrong. Check anything that touches money, law or a customer.

Claude — the document one

Made by a company called Anthropic. Less famous, and the one people tend to move to once they are working with longer material.

What it is: an assistant that is strong on long documents, careful reasoning, and drafting in your voice.

Best for: reading contracts, policies and long reports without losing the thread.

Watch out for: the same rule as any assistant — verify facts, and never paste data you would not put in an email.

Perplexity — the research one

This one works differently from the other two. It is an answer engine: it searches the live internet and shows you where each part of its answer came from.

What it is: searches the web and cites its sources, so you can click through and check.

Best for: market checks, vendor research, and "what changed this quarter" questions.

Watch out for: sources can be thin. Click through before you quote a number to anybody.

© 2026 Across the Table Business Consulting · acrossthetable.biz · All Rights Reserved

HOW THEY COMPARE

	ChatGPT	Claude	Perplexity
Best for	General business assistance	Documents and deep analysis	Research
Ease of use	Beginner	Beginner	Beginner
Small-business fit	High	High	High
Larger-business fit	High	High	High
Its main job	Create, analyse, assist	Read, organise, analyse	Search, research, verify
Price	Free tier; paid per user	Free tier; paid per user	Free tier; paid per user

Note what that table does not say. None of them is harder to use than the others, and all three suit a small business. The difference is what each is built to do, not how advanced it is.

> **WHICH ONE TO OPEN FIRST**
> If you are completely new to AI, start with a broad general-purpose assistant. Then add specialised tools once you discover the business jobs where you need more capability. Do not sign up for all three and compare — that is a way of not starting.

HOW A BUSINESS ACTUALLY USES EACH ONE

A week with ChatGPT

- Monday: you describe an awkward customer situation and ask what you might be missing.
- Tuesday: you paste your rough notes and ask for a tidy quote email.
- Thursday: you describe a job you are hiring for and ask it to draft the advert.
- Friday: you ask it to explain a term your accountant used that you did not want to admit you did not know.

A week with Claude

- A supplier sends a fourteen-page contract. You paste it in and ask what obligations it puts on you.
- You have three years of policy documents and need one plain-language staff handbook out of them.

© 2026 Across the Table Business Consulting · acrossthetable.biz · All Rights Reserved

- A long report arrives and you need the four things in it that affect you.

A week with Perplexity

- You are quoting a job in a town you do not usually work in and need to know what the going rate is.
- A customer mentions a regulation you have not heard of and you need to know whether it applies to you.
- You are choosing between two suppliers and want to know what people actually say about them.

WHAT IT COSTS

All three have a genuinely usable free version. You do not need to pay anything to find out whether this helps you.

Paid plans are priced per person per month and sit in a similar range to each other. The honest advice is to use the free version for a month first. Most small businesses find one assistant on the free tier covers what they need, and the ones who outgrow it know exactly why by then.

THE ONE THING ALL THREE GET WRONG

They can be confidently wrong. Not hesitant, not vague — wrong in a clear, well-written, entirely believable sentence.

This matters most on numbers, dates, legal points and anything about a specific company. Treat an answer as a well-read friend’s opinion, not as a professional’s advice. Anything that touches money or law gets checked before you act on it.

And keep customer names, bank details and anything you would not want repeated out of all three.

WHERE THIS SITS IN YOUR STACK

An assistant on its own is useful. Connected to the rest of your business it is considerably more useful.

Your company information lives somewhere — Google Drive or a knowledge system like Notion. Your assistant helps analyse that information and create the strategy or content. Canva turns those ideas into visual assets. Zapier automates what happens next, sending information between your business applications.

So the assistant is not operating by itself. It is connected to the information, the creative tools and the workflows that actually run your company. That is the difference between a clever toy and part of how the business works.

© 2026 Across the Table Business Consulting · acrossthetable.biz · All Rights Reserved

THE CEO DECISION

- Which job do you have most of — everyday writing and thinking, long documents, or research? That answers which to start with.
- Will you use it weekly? An assistant you open twice and forget costs nothing but teaches you nothing.
- Are you clear that it can be wrong? If you would act on an answer without checking it, wait until you would not.
- Do you know what you will never paste into it?

APPLY IT TO YOUR BUSINESS

Pick the one that matches your most common job and use only that one for two weeks. Keep a note each time it saved you something and each time it got something wrong.

At the end of two weeks you will know whether this is worth paying for, and you will know which of the three you actually needed — which is a better answer than any comparison article can give you.

YOUR QUICK REVIEW

- ☐ Which of the three matches the job I have most of?
- ☐ Have I used the free version for a fortnight before paying for anything?
- ☐ What will I never paste into it?
- ☐ Which answers do I check before acting on them?
- ☐ Where does my company information live, so the assistant can be pointed at it?
- ☐ What happens to what it produces — does anyone do anything with it?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Tool	Where to find it	What it is for
ChatGPT	chatgpt.com	General assistant. Free tier. Most businesses start here.
Claude	claude.ai	Long documents and careful reasoning. Free tier.
Perplexity	perplexity.ai	Research with sources you can click. Free tier.
Across the Table AI Assessment	acrossthetable.biz/#assessment	Fifteen minutes. Tells you which of the twenty jobs to

© 2026 Across the Table Business Consulting · acrossthetable.biz · All Rights Reserved

Tool	Where to find it	What it is for
		start with.
The Scaling Edge	acrossthetablebiz.substack.com	Weekly newsletter for owners without a business background.

CONTINUE LEARNING

This is Business Job 01 of twenty. Episode 2 is Capture Meetings — Fireflies, Otter and Fathom — which deals with everything agreed out loud on a call and then forgotten.

Explore The Scaling Edge and the Across the Table Business Learning library for the rest of the series.

READ AND CONNECT WITH ACROSS THE TABLE

Across the Table website: https://acrossthetable.biz

The Scaling Edge newsletter: https://acrossthetablebiz.substack.com

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@AcrossTheTableConnie

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/connie-jacobo-ramirez

Questions: info@acrossthetable.biz · 480-582-4716

© 2026 Across the Table Business Consulting · acrossthetable.biz · All Rights Reserved

LEGAL NOTICE AND COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2026 Across the Table Business Consulting. All Rights Reserved.

Across the Table Business Consulting is a trade name of Bold and Beautiful Beauties, Phoenix, Arizona.

Trademarks

The CEO Shift™, JuntosHR™, the Across the Table brand name, and the methodologies described in this document are trademarks of Across the Table Business Consulting and may not be used without written permission. All other product and company names are the trademarks of their respective owners and are referred to here for identification only. No endorsement, affiliation or sponsorship is implied.

Permitted use

This article is provided to the reader for their own business education and for use inside their own company.

Prohibited use

No part of this document may be copied, resold, taught as the work of another, uploaded publicly, stripped of attribution, or used to build a derivative product. Coaching or group use requires a written licence obtained from info@acrossthetable.biz.

Enforcement

Across the Table Business Consulting reserves all rights available to it, including issuing takedown notices under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and bringing civil proceedings under 17 U.S.C. § 501. Statutory damages of up to $150,000 per infringement may be sought for wilful infringement.

Disclaimer

This article is provided for educational purposes only. It is not legal, tax, accounting or financial advice, and no specific business outcome is guaranteed or implied. Prices, features and plan names for any software mentioned change without notice; confirm current pricing with the provider before committing. Always consult a qualified professional before making a financial decision for your business.

ACROSS THE TABLE BUSINESS CONSULTING

101 N First Ave, Suite 2325-1495, Phoenix, AZ 85003

info@acrossthetable.biz · 480-582-4716 · acrossthetable.biz