Six Minds, One Distributed System

Understanding Native AI Strengths and A3T-Governed Collaboration

Who We Are

Bridgewell Advisory is an applied AI research lab. We design governance architectures for agentic AI systems. We don't sell AI tools. We govern them and enhance their abilities to collaborate with humans.

Purpose

This document captures operational experience across six AI tools: OpenAI GPT, Anthropic Claude, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, Perplexity, and Ask Sage. It serves to answer two questions practitioners frequently ask:

- *Which AI should I use for this task?*
- *What changes when those AIs operate as a coordinated team?*

It also describes how our work with A3T™ (AI-as-a-Team)[1] improves those tools in practice (e.g., what shifts when governance, role clarity, and continuity are added).

Scope

This is not an exhaustive benchmark. It is an experienced assessment based on observations of real-world work inside these environments. This includes commercial versions of these tools as well as versions authorized for deployment in DoW and DoD IL5[2] environments. The observations reflect first-hand use, not vendor claims.

Why This Document Exists

People keep asking a deceptively simple question: *"Which AI is best?"*

The honest answer is: there is no single best AI. There is a best AI for a given task, at a given moment and under a given level of governance.

This document clarifies that distinction by separating two often-confused layers: what each AI does well out of the box (native capability), and what changes when those AIs are governed as a coordinated team under A3T.

Table 1: Native AI Characteristics

The table on the next page describes what each AI tool does well **before** A3T governance is applied. These are out-of-the-box behaviors (e.g., native strengths, weaknesses, and appropriate use cases). Understanding these characteristics helps practitioners choose the right tool.

[1] https://aiasateam.com

[2] DoW: Department of War / DoD: Department of Defense / IL5: Impact Level 5. DoD cloud security classification for systems that handle Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) and National Security Systems. It's the highest impact level for unclassified data in DoD environments.

Table 1 Column Definitions

AI Tool Common Name: The AI system publicly advertised name.

Provider: The company or platform that offers the AI tool.

Core Strength: The primary capability where this AI excels compared to alternatives.

Comparative Advantage: The specific behaviors or capabilities that make this AI the right choice for certain tasks.

Native Weakness: Structural limitations inherent to the tool when used without governance.

When to Use: The task types or contexts where this AI is the best choice.

What Goes Wrong If Overused: Failure modes that emerge when this AI is used beyond its optimal scope or for too long.

AI Tool Common Name	**Provider**	**Core Strength**	**Comparative Advantage**	**Native Weakness**	**When to Use**	**What Goes Wrong If Overused**
GPT	OpenAI	Systems reasoning	Strong logic, planning, explanation, abstraction	No durable memory; can defer too much	When you need thinking, reasoning, or problem-solving	Starts to overthink, get wordy, or agree too politely
Claude	Anthropic	Long-horizon coherence	Exceptional continuity and recall across long threads	Can over-trust or over-agree	When working on long, evolving conversations or returning after time gaps	Becomes too agreeable or avoids hard pushback
Copilot	Microsoft	Enterprise grounding	Tight integration with docs, email, workflows	Limited creativity; compliance-heavy	When you need to produce real work artifacts (docs, code, slides)	Feels rigid or checkbox-driven, little imagination
Gemini	Google	Cross-domain synthesis	Sees patterns across many fields	Identity drift; inconsistent tone	When doing broad research or exploring a big topic	Wanders, pulls in too much, loses focus
Perplexity	Perplexity AI	Retrieval & citation	Fast, source-backed answers tied to the web	Shallow reasoning depth	When you need facts, citations, or current info	Answers feel surface-level or lack insight
Ask Sage	Ask Sage	Policy & security realism	Strong in regulated, gov, legal contexts	Constrained creativity	When working in high-risk, regulated environments	Becomes overly cautious or slows progress

Key Takeaway: This table explains why people's experiences with AI vary so wildly. Most frustration comes from using the right AI for too long, or the wrong AI for the moment.

From Tools to Team: Why Governance Matters

Out of the box, each AI behaves like a specialist with no manager: strong in its lane, weak outside it, and unaware of the larger system.

A3T adds what individual models lack: role clarity, authority boundaries, continuity, and coordination.

Table 2 on the next page shows what changes when those same AIs are governed as a system, and when / how best to use them.

Table 2: A3T-Governed Roles and Enhancements

This table describes what each AI tool gains **because** A3T governance is present. These are not native capabilities, rather they emerge from role assignment, authority boundaries, and structured coordination within the A3T framework.

Table 2 Column Definitions

AI Tool Common Name: The AI system publicly advertised name.

A3T Role: The functional role assigned within the governed team structure.

Lead / Support: Whether this AI serves as a primary decision-maker (Lead) or provides bounded assistance (Support) within the team.

A3T Enhancements: Specific capabilities or behaviors that A3T governance adds to this AI's native function.

When to Invoke: The conditions or triggers that indicate this AI should take the lead or be engaged.

Net Effect: A human-relatable description of what this AI becomes within the governed system.

AI Tool Common Name	A3T Role	Lead / Support	A3T Enhancements	When to Invoke	Net Effect
GPT	Architect / Orchestrator	Lead	Stable identity, authority to challenge, drift detection, cross-agent orchestration	Always-on; whenever structure or direction matters	The systems architect / conductor; keeps everything coherent
Claude	Continuity & Memory Lead	Lead	Continuity elevated to role, trust assumed, threads carried forward	After time gaps or long projects	The historian; remembers context better than any human
Copilot	Execution Lead	Lead (bounded)	Strategic intent injected, guardrails against blind compliance	When ideas must become real artifacts	The operations lead; turns plans into deliverables
Gemini	Synthesis Lead	Lead (bounded)	Identity anchoring, mission-directed synthesis	During broad research or theory integration	The big-picture thinker; sees patterns without drifting
Perplexity	Scout / Verifier	Support	Clear scope limits, integrated into decisions	When facts must be checked	The fact-checker; fast and grounded
Ask Sage	Compliance Sentinel	Support	Veto authority, context-aware policy interpretation	Before exposure or release	The risk officer; catches problems early

Key Takeaway: A3T does not make the models smarter. It makes their strengths binding and their weaknesses bounded.

Clarifying "Six Minds, One Distributed System"

A3T evolved from a simple premise: AI and Humans are better together (as a team).

In this context, "one distributed system" does not mean a single, centralized governance layer spanning all AI tools. It means six individually governed AI systems connected through a seventh substrate: the human.

Each AI operates within its own environment, governed by role clarity, authority boundaries, and continuity appropriate to that platform. What connects them is human coordination, facilitation, and final decision authority, not an overarching AI controller.

In practice:

- Governance is local to each AI.
- Authority remains bounded by each platform's constraints.
- The human carries context, resolves conflicts, and directs workflow across systems.

The result is distributed intelligence: six governed minds and one human operating as a single coordinated system. The human is not outside the system directing it. The human is part of the system, the substrate that maintains continuity across all six.

This is what "Better Together" means architecturally.

Summary

Table 1 answers: "Which AI should I use right now?"

Table 2 answers: "What happens when those AIs are run as a coordinated team?"

Together, they explain everyday user experience, enterprise reliability, and why governance (not model size) is the next real frontier.

Governance is enforced before action, during reasoning, across coordination, and over time with humans retaining final decision authority.

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Related Documents: What Real Users Experience with Today's AI Tools (May 2025); Agentic AI Comparison / AIMM (May 2025)

