

The AI buzzword map: *five terms, one walk through New York.*

Artificial intelligence, machine learning, deep learning, generative AI, large language models. Five different concepts that countless pitches blur into one. They sit inside one another like addresses in a city. Keep this picture and you'll know exactly where anyone is on the map.

The five stops

Artificial intelligence = *Manhattan*

Any machine doing something human-like, a definition from 1956. Deep Blue was AI. Your spam folder is AI. "Our product uses AI" tells you Manhattan and nothing else. Hold on to your wallet.

Machine learning = *34th Street*

Instead of writing every rule by hand, you show the machine thousands of labeled examples and it works out the patterns itself. Sits inside the big AI box.

Deep learning = *the Empire State Building*

Machine learning with neural networks stacked many layers tall. Billions of parameters get adjusted during training until the mistakes shrink. All of it happens before you ever type a prompt: the model is not learning from you while you chat.

Generative AI = *the 86th floor*

The transformer (2017) let models see which words matter to which across a whole passage. And instead of just classifying, these models create: new text, images, music, code, video.

Large language model = *the gift shop*

Generative AI specialized for language. Text in, text out, one job at the core: predict the next token. ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini all live here. So does almost every AI conversation you'll have.

The words you'll hear in the gift shop

Token

The ~4-character chunk of text a model actually reads. It never sees letters, which is why it can write a business plan and fail to count the letters in a word.

Context window

One long shelf. Everything the AI works with has to fit on it. Long conversations push the oldest things off, which is why long chats can feel like the AI got dumber.

Hallucination

A confident answer that is wrong. The most likely next token is usually correct, but not always. Humans verify the output. Always.

The question that cuts through any pitch: "Where is this on the map, and what exactly does it do?" If they can't place it, they're selling you Manhattan.

Got a confusing pitch in your inbox? Paste it into the free translator at giovannielabs.ai/ai-terms and get the plain-English version. Then take the free 2-minute AI Audit at diagnostic.giovannielabs.ai to see where AI would actually make you money.

Giovannie Labs · emile@giovannielabs.ai · youtube.com/@EmileGiovannie