

WELCOME TRADERS

HOW TO TALK TO AI

The Complete Beginner's Guide to Prompt Engineering

Learn how to write better prompts, get better AI answers,
and work smarter with artificial intelligence.

Ask Better. Create Better. Work Smarter.



Welcome Traders

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18 CHAPTERS · PROMPT TEMPLATES · EXERCISES

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the New Way of Working With AI

Artificial intelligence is now used for writing, research, business, education, coding, marketing, design and everyday productivity. The tools are impressive. Yet most people get disappointing results from them, and the reason is almost always the same.

They ask vague questions and expect excellent answers.

AI systems respond to instructions. A short, unclear instruction produces a short, unclear answer. A clear instruction with context, a defined goal and a requested format produces something you can actually use. That skill has a name: prompt engineering. It is not coding, and it is not a secret list of magic words. It is clear communication, written down.

KEY TAKEAWAY

AI does not replace clear thinking. It amplifies it.

What you will learn in this book

- ✓ What a prompt is and why it matters
- ✓ The 7-part structure of a strong prompt
- ✓ How to give AI the right context
- ✓ How to assign roles and control tone
- ✓ How to request a specific output format
- ✓ How to break big tasks into steps
- ✓ How to fix weak prompts and bad answers
- ✓ 10 reusable prompt templates
- ✓ How to use AI for work, study and business
- ✓ How to verify AI output and protect privacy

PRO TIP

Read with a chat window open. Every example in this book is written to be copied, edited with your own details, and tested immediately.

CHAPTER 1

Understanding AI

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A short, practical explanation of the tools you are about to instruct.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is software that performs tasks we normally associate with human thinking: understanding language, recognising patterns, summarising, drafting and answering questions. The tools most people use today are built on large language models.

Term	What it means in plain language
Artificial intelligence	Software that performs tasks associated with human reasoning, language and pattern recognition.
Generative AI	AI that creates new content — text, images, audio, video or code — rather than only sorting existing data.
Large language model	A model trained on very large amounts of text so it can predict and produce language that fits your request.
Chatbot / AI assistant	The conversational interface you type into. It passes your prompt to a model and returns the response.
Image generation	Tools that produce pictures from written descriptions.
AI coding tools	Assistants that write, explain, review or debug code from written instructions.

REMEMBER

Think of an AI assistant as an extremely capable collaborator that needs clear instructions. It has broad knowledge and no knowledge of your situation until you supply it.

What AI is good at — and where it fails

STRONG AT

- Drafting and rewriting text
- Summarising material you provide
- Explaining concepts at any level
- Structuring ideas and plans
- Producing many options quickly

WEAK AT

- Knowing your private context
- Guaranteeing factual accuracy
- Recent events beyond its training
- Complex arithmetic and figures
- Judging what matters most to you

QUICK ANSWER

Can AI be wrong? Yes. AI can be helpful, but it is not automatically correct. Treat every output as a capable first draft that you review.

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CHAPTER 2

What Is a Prompt?

The single input that decides the quality of everything you get back.

A prompt is the instruction, question, context or request you give to an AI system. It is the whole message you send — not only the question at the end of it. Everything you include becomes part of what the AI works from, and everything you leave out, it has to guess.

Watch the same request improve three times

BAD PROMPT

Write something about marketing.

No topic, no audience, no length, no format. The AI must invent all of it, so the answer is generic and you start again.

BETTER PROMPT

Write a 500-word beginner-friendly article explaining five digital marketing strategies for small businesses.

Now there is a topic, a length and a reading level. The result is usable but still has no defined voice, structure or reader.

BEST PROMPT

You are a digital marketing consultant. Write a 500-word beginner-friendly article explaining five practical digital marketing strategies for small businesses. Use simple English, clear headings, examples, and a short conclusion. The target audience is business owners with no marketing experience.

WHY IT WORKS

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| ✓ Clear role | ✓ Defined length |
| ✓ Specific task | ✓ Named audience |
| ✓ Requested structure | ✓ Controlled reading level |

KEY TAKEAWAY

You are not asking a question. You are writing a brief.

CHAPTER 3

The Anatomy of a Great Prompt

Seven building blocks you can mix and match for any task.

Component	What it does	Example
Role	Sets the perspective and expertise	You are an experienced SEO consultant.
Task	States the action clearly	Create an SEO content strategy.
Context	Describes your situation	The site is a small local plumbing company.
Goal	Explains the outcome you want	Increase organic traffic and generate leads.
Constraints	Sets limits and rules	Use simple language; focus on local search.
Output format	Defines the shape of the answer	Provide the strategy in a table.
Examples	Shows the pattern to follow	Match the style of the sample below.

Not every prompt needs all seven parts. A quick question needs one or two. A business deliverable benefits from most of them. As the task grows, add components rather than adding adjectives.

ALL SEVEN PARTS COMBINED

You are an experienced SEO consultant.
Create an SEO content strategy for a small local plumbing company in Doha, Qatar. The goal is to increase organic traffic and generate enquiry calls. Use simple language and focus on local search. Present the strategy as a table with columns for Topic, Target Keyword, Search Intent and Suggested Page.

EXERCISE

Take any request you sent to an AI tool this week and label its parts. Which of the seven components were missing? Add two of them and send it again.

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CHAPTER 4

Clarity Is Your Superpower

Ambiguity is the most common reason for a disappointing answer.

WEAK PROMPT

"Make me a website."

What kind of site? For whom? Which sections?

Which language? The AI guesses, and its guess is average.

STRONG PROMPT

"Create a modern responsive homepage for a local home maintenance company in Doha, Qatar. Include a hero section, service cards, customer benefits, testimonials, FAQ, contact section and strong call-to-action buttons."

Six questions that remove ambiguity

Question	What to state in your prompt
What	The exact deliverable: article, email, plan, table, script, code
Who	The audience and their level of knowledge
Why	The purpose: inform, persuade, sell, teach, summarise
Where	Where it will be used: website, LinkedIn, brochure, classroom
How	The format, tone and structure you expect
How much	Word count, number of items, level of detail

EXERCISE

Rewrite this vague request using the six questions above:

- Before: "Write a post about AI."
- After: "You are a social media copywriter. Write a 120-word LinkedIn post for small business owners explaining one practical way AI saves them time each week. Friendly professional tone, no jargon, end with a question that invites comments."

PRO TIP

If you cannot describe what a good answer looks like, the AI cannot produce one. Write the description first, then turn it into the prompt.

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CHAPTER 5

Context Makes AI Smarter

The model knows a great deal about the world and nothing about you.

WITHOUT CONTEXT

Write an email.

WITH CONTEXT

You are helping a small cleaning company respond to a customer who complained about a delayed appointment. Write a polite professional apology email that acknowledges the issue, offers a solution and maintains a friendly tone.

Both prompts ask for an email. Only the second one can produce an email you would actually send, because it explains the situation, the relationship and the outcome you want.

Eight kinds of context worth including

- Audience — who reads or uses this
- Business — what you do and sell
- Industry — norms, terms, regulations
- Situation — what happened and when
- Previous information — earlier decisions
- Desired outcome — what success looks like
- Restrictions — what to avoid or exclude
- Existing content — text you want matched

CHECKLIST

Before you press send, ask: does the AI know enough about my situation?

- Have I said who the reader is?
- Have I described my business or subject in one line?
- Have I said what a successful result looks like?
- Have I mentioned anything it must avoid?

WARNING

Context does not mean confidential data. Share the situation, not passwords, client records, financial credentials or anything you are not permitted to disclose.

CHAPTER 6

Tell AI Who It Should Be

Role prompting sets the vocabulary, depth and priorities of the answer.

A request for feedback on a business plan reads differently when answered as a teacher, an investor or an accountant. Naming the role tells the AI which perspective and level of expertise to write from, and it usually improves structure as much as content.

THE REUSABLE ROLE FORMULA

You are a [ROLE] with expertise in [AREA]. Help me [TASK].

Five practical examples

Role	Prompt
Copywriter	You are a professional copywriter with expertise in e-commerce. Help me write three product descriptions for a handmade candle brand.
Teacher	You are an experienced science teacher. Help me explain the water cycle to a class of 11-year-olds in under 200 words.
Developer	You are a senior software developer with expertise in Python. Help me review this function and explain any weaknesses.
Career coach	You are a career coach with expertise in hiring. Help me rewrite my CV summary for a customer service role.
Consultant	You are a business consultant with expertise in small retail. Help me find three ways to increase repeat customers.

PRO TIP

Add a level of experience and a bias. "You are a cautious financial writer who avoids hype" produces a very different draft from "You are a bold marketing copywriter."

COMMON MISTAKE

Assigning a role does not make the answer authoritative. A prompt that begins "You are a doctor" still produces AI-generated text, not medical advice.

CHAPTER 7

Tell AI What the Answer Should Look Like

Format instructions turn a wall of text into something you can use immediately.

Formats you can request by name

- Bullet points and numbered lists
- Tables with named columns
- Step-by-step instructions
- Checklists
- JSON or CSV data
- Markdown
- Email with subject line
- Blog post with headings
- Social media post with hashtags
- Lesson plan
- Report with sections
- Presentation outline with slide titles

NO FORMAT

Give me SEO keywords.

WITH FORMAT

Generate 30 SEO keywords for a plumbing company in Doha. Organize them into a table with columns for Keyword, Search Intent, Keyword Type and Suggested Page.

WHY IT WORKS

- ✓ Countable output
- ✓ Defined structure
- ✓ Sortable columns
- ✓ Ready to paste into a sheet

Format instructions save the step you would otherwise do by hand. They also make results comparable: when every answer arrives in the same table, you can run the same prompt for ten products and merge the output.

TRY THIS

Add one line to your next prompt: "Present the answer as a table with columns for X, Y and Z." It is the fastest single upgrade in this book.

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CHAPTER 8

Control the Voice

What to say is one decision. How to say it is a separate one.

Seven dials you can set

Dial	Example instruction
Tone	Warm and encouraging / direct and factual
Reading level	Explain it for a 12-year-old / for an expert audience
Length	Under 150 words / exactly five bullet points
Style	Editorial, technical, conversational, minimal
Audience	For first-time buyers with no technical background
Personality	Confident but never pushy; no exclamation marks
Formality	Formal business English / relaxed everyday English

Tone words that work well in prompts

Professional · Friendly · Persuasive · Educational · Simple · Technical · Conversational · Luxury · Minimal · Humorous

VOICE CONTROL EXAMPLE

Rewrite this text in a professional but friendly tone for small business owners. Use simple English and avoid corporate jargon. Keep the meaning and the key facts unchanged.

PRO TIP

Negative instructions are powerful. "Avoid buzzwords", "no exclamation marks", "do not use the word revolutionary" remove the habits you dislike faster than any positive description.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Separate the two decisions. First tell the AI what to produce, then tell it how the result should sound and who it is for.

CHAPTER 9

Show AI What You Mean

When description fails, demonstration works.

Some things are hard to describe and easy to show. If you want a particular style, structure or format, include one or two finished examples in the prompt and ask the AI to continue the pattern. This technique is called few-shot prompting: you give a few shots, or samples, before the real request. A prompt with no examples is called zero-shot.

FEW-SHOT PROMPT

Turn these product descriptions into short marketing headlines.

Example:

Product: Running shoes

Headline: Run Further. Feel Better.

Product: Coffee machine

Headline: Better Coffee. Every Morning.

Now create headlines in the same style for these products:

1. Wireless earbuds 2. Office chair 3. Water filter

Three ways to use examples

Use case	What to paste as your example
Writing	Two paragraphs of your own writing, then: "match this voice and sentence length"
Marketing	Two headlines that performed well, then ask for ten more in the same pattern
Data formatting	One correctly formatted row, then ask for the rest of the rows to match exactly

KEY TAKEAWAY

Two good examples usually beat two paragraphs of description.

TRY THIS

Find something you wrote that you are proud of. Paste two paragraphs of it into a prompt and ask for a new piece "in the same voice, sentence length and level of formality." Compare it with a version written without the sample.

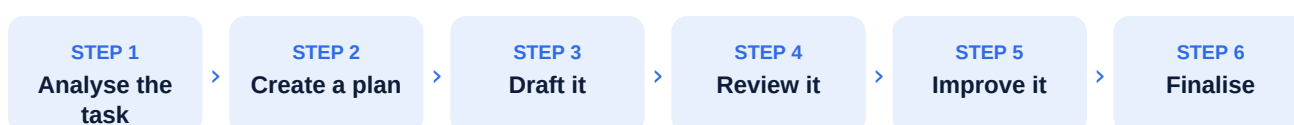
10

CHAPTER 10

Break Big Problems Into Smaller Tasks

Large requests produce shallow answers. Sequences produce depth.

When you ask for everything at once, the AI spreads limited attention across every part of the request and returns something thin on all of it. Splitting the work into stages lets you check each result and correct course before the next step builds on it.



Example: a marketing strategy, one step at a time

ASKING FOR EVERYTHING

"Create my entire marketing strategy."
One prompt, one generic answer, nothing specific to your business.

ASKING IN SEQUENCE

1. "First analyse my business."
2. "Identify my target audience."
3. "Create my keyword strategy."
4. "Create content topics."
5. "Create a 30-day marketing plan."

This is iterative prompting: each answer becomes the input for the next prompt. Paste the approved result back in and say "using the audience profile above, now create..." so the chain stays connected to your decisions rather than restarting each time.

PRO TIP

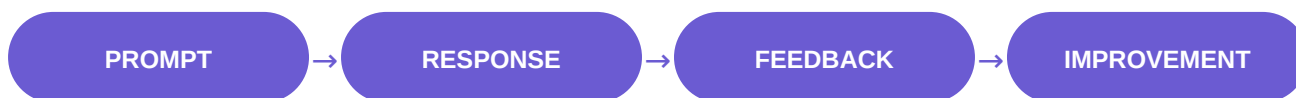
End a planning prompt with: "Before writing anything, list the questions you need me to answer." You will discover the gaps in your own brief.

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CHAPTER 11

Your First Prompt Doesn't Have to Be Perfect

Prompting is a conversation, not a single command.



The fastest way to a strong result is rarely a perfect opening prompt. It is a reasonable first prompt followed by two or three precise corrections. Each follow-up keeps everything that worked and changes only what did not.

Ten follow-ups worth memorising

- "Make this clearer."
- "Give me three alternatives."
- "Make it shorter."
- "Make it more professional."
- "Explain this for a beginner."
- "Add examples."
- "Turn this into a table."
- "Find weaknesses in this answer."
- "Rewrite it for my target audience."
- "Make the instructions more practical."

TRY THIS

Ask the AI to critique its own draft before you do: "List three weaknesses in the answer above, then rewrite it fixing them." You often get the improved version in one step.

REMEMBER

Say what to keep, not only what to change. "Keep the structure and the examples, but make the introduction half as long" protects the parts you already liked.



Your instruction on the left, the improved response on the right: each round narrows the gap.

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CHAPTER 12

Why AI Gives Bad Answers

Most poor responses are diagnosable — and the diagnosis is usually the prompt.

Cause	How to fix it
Vague instructions	State the deliverable, length and audience explicitly
Missing context	Add your situation, business and desired outcome
Conflicting instructions	Remove contradictions such as "detailed but very short"
Too many requirements	Split the request into two or three prompts
No output format	Name the format: table, list, email, outline
Ambiguous audience	Say exactly who will read it and what they already know
Incorrect assumptions	Correct the assumption directly and ask it to redo the answer
Outdated information	Supply current material yourself and ask it to work only from that
Poor source material	Improve the notes or data you pasted in before re-running

The troubleshooting habit

Stop. Ask one question: what exactly is wrong with this answer? Name it in a single sentence — wrong length, wrong reader, wrong tone, missing detail, invented fact — then repair the matching part of the prompt: context, task, constraints, output or examples.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Bad response? Don't immediately start over. Diagnose the prompt.

TRY THIS

Keep a short note of the fixes that work for you. Most people repeat the same three mistakes, and once you know yours, your first drafts improve permanently.

QUICK ANSWER

Why does AI sometimes give bad answers? Usually because the instruction was incomplete, contradictory or missing context - and sometimes because the model produced confident but incorrect information. Chapter 17 covers the second case.

CHAPTER 13

10 Ready-to-Use Prompt Templates

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Copy these, replace the bracketed placeholders, and keep them in a notes file.

Template	Prompt
1. Writing	You are a professional writer. Write a [FORMAT] about [TOPIC] for [TARGET AUDIENCE] in a [TONE] tone. Length: [LENGTH]. Include [KEY POINTS].
2. Blog	You are a content writer. Write a [LENGTH] blog post titled [TOPIC] for [TARGET AUDIENCE]. Use H2 headings, short paragraphs, one example per section and a conclusion with a call to action.
3. SEO	You are an SEO specialist. Create a keyword plan for [BUSINESS] in [LOCATION]. Output a table: Keyword, Search Intent, Difficulty Estimate, Suggested Page.
4. Social	You are a social media manager. Write [NUMBER] [PLATFORM] posts promoting [PRODUCT] to [TARGET AUDIENCE]. Include a hook, one benefit, a call to action and five hashtags.
5. Business	You are a business consultant. Analyse [BUSINESS] and suggest [NUMBER] practical ways to achieve [GOAL] within [TIMEFRAME]. Present as a table with effort and expected impact.
6. Email	You are a professional communicator. Write an email to [RECIPIENT] about [SITUATION]. Goal: [GOAL]. Tone: [TONE]. Keep it under [LENGTH] and include a clear subject line.
7. Learning	You are an experienced teacher. Explain [TOPIC] at [LEVEL]. Use one analogy and one worked example, then give me five questions to test my understanding.
8. Research	You are a research assistant. Summarise the material I paste below about [TOPIC] in [FORMAT]. List key points, open questions and anything that needs verification.
9. Career	You are a career coach. Rewrite my CV summary for a [ROLE] position at [COMPANY TYPE]. Emphasise [STRENGTHS], keep it under 90 words, and use active verbs.
10. Ideas	You are a creative strategist. Generate [NUMBER] ideas for [GOAL] for [BUSINESS]. For each, give a one-line description, the effort required and the first step.

PRO TIP

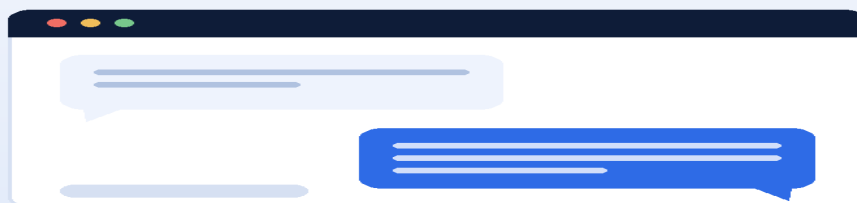
Save these in one document and name each template. A prompt library you can reuse is worth more than any single clever prompt.

CHAPTER 14

Use AI as Your Productivity Partner

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Practical applications for work, business and daily operations.



- Emails and replies
- Meeting summaries from your notes
- Reports and executive summaries
- Customer service responses
- Marketing copy and campaigns
- Product descriptions
- Brainstorming and naming
- Research planning
- Business idea evaluation
- SOPs and process documents
- Presentation outlines
- Data organisation and cleanup
- Content calendars

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

You are a business operations consultant. Create a simple SOP for handling customer inquiries for a small service business. Include purpose, responsibilities, a step-by-step process and a quality checklist. Keep it under one page and use plain language.

MEETING SUMMARY

You are an executive assistant. Turn the meeting notes below into a summary with three sections: decisions made, action items with owners and deadlines, and open questions. Notes: [PASTE NOTES]

TRY THIS

Pick the task you repeat most often this week. Write one template for it today. You will use it fifty times this year.

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CHAPTER 15

Learn With AI

A patient tutor that explains the same idea in ten different ways.

Eight responsible study uses

- Explain difficult topics simply
- Create practice quizzes
- Summarise notes you provide
- Generate flashcards
- Practise a language in conversation
- Build a study plan
- Explain a concept at several levels
- Brainstorm research questions

LEARN AND SELF-TEST

Explain photosynthesis as if I am 12 years old. Then give me five questions to test whether I understood it. Do not include the answers until I reply with mine.

STUDY PLAN

You are a study coach. I have an exam on [SUBJECT] in [NUMBER] days and I struggle with [TOPIC]. Build a daily study plan with short sessions, and include one self-test at the end of each day.

REMEMBER

Learn with AI. Don't let AI learn for you. A summary you did not read teaches you nothing, and an assignment you did not write is not your work. Check your school or university policy before using AI for assessed work.

EXERCISE

Ask an AI assistant to explain a topic you already know well. Grade the answer. Spotting what it got wrong is the fastest way to learn how much verification these tools need.

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CHAPTER 16

Level Up Your Prompting

Named techniques, explained in plain language.

Technique	What it means and when to use it
Zero-shot	Asking directly with no examples. Fine for simple, familiar tasks.
Few-shot	Including two or three examples so the AI copies the pattern. Best for style and formatting.
Role prompting	Naming the expertise and perspective the answer should come from.
Structured	Writing the prompt in labelled sections: Role, Task, Context, Output.
Iterative	Improving the result through follow-ups instead of one perfect prompt.
Constraint	Stating limits: word count, forbidden words, required sections, reading level.
Prompt chaining	Using the output of one prompt as the input to the next, in a fixed sequence.

Asking for reasoning, responsibly

You cannot inspect a model's internal process, and asking for hidden reasoning is not useful. What you can ask for is a visible account of the answer: a concise explanation, the key assumptions it relied on, a step-by-step summary of the solution, a verification checklist, or the criteria it used to judge options. These give you something to check.

Building reusable workflows

A workflow is a saved sequence: research prompt, outline prompt, draft prompt, review prompt. Some tools let you save these as reusable templates or connect them into AI agents that run several steps for you. Capabilities differ by product and change often, so treat the principles here as stable and verify any specific feature in that tool's own documentation.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Advanced prompting is mostly ordinary prompting, saved and reused.

CHAPTER 17

17

Don't Believe Everything AI Says

The most important chapter in this book.

AI systems generate language that fits your request. Fitting well and being true are not the same thing. A confident tone is not evidence, and a detailed answer can still be wrong.

Seven risks to watch for

Risk	What it looks like
Hallucination	Invented facts, events, statistics or products stated confidently
Outdated information	Answers that reflect an older state of the world
False citations	Sources, authors, page numbers or links that do not exist
Incorrect calculations	Arithmetic and unit errors inside otherwise sensible text
Misinterpretation	A fluent answer to a slightly different question than you asked
Bias	Skewed assumptions inherited from training data or from your own prompt
Privacy exposure	Sensitive data entered into a service without appropriate safeguards

GENERATE



CHECK



VERIFY



USE

WARNING

For medical, legal, financial, safety-critical or other high-stakes decisions, consult qualified professionals and reliable primary sources. AI output is a starting point for your own judgement, never a substitute for it.

PRO TIP

Do not paste sensitive information into AI tools unless you understand how that service handles data and have an appropriate reason to do so. Avoid passwords, private keys, financial credentials, highly sensitive personal information and confidential business material.

CHAPTER 18

Your AI Prompting Cheat Sheet

THE 7-PART PROMPT FORMULA



THE 10 GOLDEN RULES OF PROMPTING

1. Be clear.
2. Give context.
3. Define the goal.
4. Specify the audience.
5. Tell AI the desired format.
6. Give examples when useful.
7. Break complex tasks into steps.
8. Review and improve the response.
9. Verify important information.
10. Protect private information.

THE MASTER PROMPT TEMPLATE

```
You are a [ROLE].  
Your task is to [TASK].  
Context: [CONTEXT]  
Goal: [GOAL]  
Target audience: [AUDIENCE]  
Requirements: [REQUIREMENTS]  
Constraints: [CONSTRAINTS]  
Output format: [FORMAT]  
Examples / reference: [EXAMPLES]  
Before giving the final answer, check that your response follows all  
requirements.
```

Learning to talk to AI is not about finding magic words. It is about learning to communicate clearly, think critically, provide context, and improve your instructions.

TRY THIS

Start with one prompt today. Improve it. Test it. Learn from the result.