

Practical AI Use Cases

A quick-reference guide to getting more useful results from AI

The Six Ingredients of a Good Prompt

Most disappointing AI results aren't a model problem, they're a context problem. The AI can only work with what you give it. This framework covers the six things worth considering before you hit enter, so the AI has enough to actually be useful.

You don't need to use each one every time. Think of it as a checklist to draw from, not a form to fill out completely.

PERSONA — Who/what is the AI acting as?

CONTEXT — What's the situation?

GOAL — What are you trying to accomplish?

AUDIENCE — Who is this for?

CONSTRAINTS — What should it avoid or consider?

OUTPUT — What do you want back?

An example

Basic:

"Write an email responding to this."

Better:

PERSONA: Act as a professional communications advisor. CONTEXT: [Paste the original email.] GOAL: Respond while addressing these points: [points]. AUDIENCE: A professional colleague. CONSTRAINTS: Don't add facts or commitments I didn't provide. Keep it conversational. OUTPUT: A concise email response.

You don't need all six ingredients for every prompt. The more complex the task, the more context you should provide.

The Six Jobs You Can Give AI

Before you think about wording, it helps to know what kind of help you're actually asking for. Most requests fall into one of six jobs.

Job	Ask AI to...	Examples
 Researcher	Find, organize & synthesize	Research a topic, summarize, compare documents, identify themes
 Writer	Create & refine	Emails, reports, presentations, proposals, social content
 Planner	Build plans & processes	Project plans, SOPs, checklists, agendas, workflows
 Advisor	Challenge & analyze	Decisions, risks, assumptions, alternatives, brainstorming
 Editor	Transform & improve	Summarize, simplify, restructure, change tone or audience
 Automator	Execute & automate tasks	Write or debug code, build formulas, automate repetitive tasks, design workflows between tools, troubleshoot technical problems

Not sure where to start? Identify the job first.

What do you actually need AI to help you accomplish?

Practical Use Cases & Prompts

A short set of high-value, general-purpose prompts for each job. Swap in your own topic, audience, and details wherever you see brackets.

Researcher

Research a topic

I need to understand [TOPIC] well enough to [GOAL]. Research the topic and summarize the most important findings. Distinguish facts from interpretation and cite your sources where possible.

Compare information

Compare the following [DOCUMENTS/SOURCES]. Identify the most important similarities, differences, changes, and areas that require further investigation.

Learn something

Explain [TOPIC] as if you were teaching someone with no prior experience. Start with the fundamentals, use practical examples, and identify the most important concepts I should understand.

Writer

Draft from notes

I need to create [TYPE OF CONTENT] for [AUDIENCE]. Using the notes below, create a first draft that accomplishes [GOAL]. Don't add facts, commitments, or information that I haven't provided.

Rewrite for an audience

Rewrite the following for [AUDIENCE]. Preserve the meaning and important details, but adjust the language, tone, and level of detail so it is appropriate for this audience.

Prepare a presentation

Turn the following information into a [NUMBER]-slide presentation outline for [AUDIENCE]. Focus on the most important points and organize them into a logical story.

Build a plan

I need to accomplish [GOAL] by [DATE]. Here is the context, available resources, and constraints: [DETAILS]. Create a practical step-by-step plan and identify dependencies, risks, and information I'm missing.

Create a process

Turn the following notes into a clear process that [AUDIENCE] can follow. Identify any missing or ambiguous steps I should clarify before finalizing it.



Advisor

Challenge my thinking

I am considering [DECISION/IDEA]. Here is the context: [CONTEXT]. Act as a critical thought partner. Don't simply agree with my assumptions. Identify what I'm overlooking, challenge my reasoning, present alternative perspectives, and identify the most important questions I should answer.

Identify risks

I'm considering [CHANGE/DECISION]. Identify potential risks, unintended consequences, dependencies, and second-order effects I may not have considered. Prioritize them by importance.

Argue against me

Here is the position I am considering: [POSITION]. Make the strongest reasonable argument against it. Focus on substantive weaknesses rather than inventing objections. Then identify what evidence would strengthen or weaken each side.



Editor

Summarize

Summarize the following into [FORMAT/LENGTH]. Preserve the key facts, decisions, and important nuances. Do not introduce information that isn't in the original.

Transform

Transform the following [CONTENT] into [DESIRED FORMAT] for [AUDIENCE] while preserving the important information.



Automator

Design a workflow

I want to automate [PROCESS/TASK]. Here is how it currently works: [CURRENT STEPS]. Design an automated workflow using [TOOLS/PLATFORMS], including the trigger, the conditions, and any step that still needs a person.

Write or debug code

Write [CODE/SCRIPT] that accomplishes [GOAL] using [LANGUAGE/TOOL]. Explain what it does in plain language, and flag any assumptions or edge cases I should test before relying on it.

Build a formula or spreadsheet logic

I need a formula or spreadsheet logic that accomplishes [GOAL] using [DATA/COLUMNS]. Explain how it works in plain language and note any limitations I should be aware of.

The AI Quick Reference

A one-page recap you can keep next to your keyboard.

Before you hit enter:

1. What job am I asking AI to do?

 Researcher  Writer  Planner  Advisor  Editor  Automator

2. What does AI need to know?

- ☐ PERSONA — Who should it act as?
- ☐ CONTEXT — What's happening?
- ☐ GOAL — What am I trying to accomplish?
- ☐ AUDIENCE — Who is this for?
- ☐ CONSTRAINTS — What matters or should be avoided?
- ☐ OUTPUT — What do I want back?

3. Before I use the result:

- ☐ Is the information accurate?
- ☐ Did AI make assumptions?
- ☐ Did it introduce anything I didn't provide?
- ☐ What should I challenge or verify?
- ☐ **Am I making the decision — or letting AI make it for me?**

One final principle

The goal isn't to write the perfect prompt. Give AI enough context to be useful, then use your judgment to decide what to do with the result.