

## Prompting Basics

- **Be specific and detailed** — vague prompts produce vague results. Include context, constraints, and desired format.
- **State tone, format, and audience** — tell the AI who it is writing for and how the output should look.
- **Use examples in your prompt** — show the AI what good output looks like by including a sample.
- **Break big tasks into steps** — chain smaller prompts together rather than asking for everything at once.
- **Iterate and refine** — your first prompt is a draft. Refine based on what comes back.

## Iteration Tips

- **Say "more formal" or "more concise"** — direct style adjustments in follow-up prompts to steer the tone.
- **Ask "what did I miss?"** — let the AI critique your prompt or plan to find gaps you had not considered.
- **Use "rewrite section 2 only"** — target specific parts for revision rather than regenerating everything.
- **Chain prompts logically** — first gather, then analyse, then format. Do not try all three at once.

## Power Prompt Techniques

- **"Act As" technique** — assign a role: "Act as a senior financial analyst reviewing a quarterly board pack."
- **Use structured output** — request tables, bullet lists, numbered steps, or specific formatting explicitly.
- **Role + Task + Context** — combine who the AI should be, what it should do, and what background it needs.
- **Ask for multiple options** — request 3 variations so you can pick the best and refine from there.
- **Specify formatting rules** — e.g. "Use British English. Max 200 words. Use H2 headings per section."

## Common Pitfalls

- **Accepting the first output** — always review and refine. The first response is rarely the best one.
- **Providing no context** — AI cannot read your mind. Background information dramatically improves results.
- **Asking for too much at once** — complex multi-part requests often produce shallow answers. Break them up.
- **Ignoring hallucinations** — AI can confidently state incorrect facts. Always verify claims and references.

## Good vs Bad Prompt Examples

| Weak Prompt                              | Strong Prompt   |
|--|---|
| "Write me something about our strategy." | "Draft a 200-word executive summary of our 2026 digital transformation strategy, for the board, professional tone, 3 key priorities." |
| "Make this email better."                | "Rewrite this email to a senior client. Concise, professional, empathetic. Under 150 words. Original: [paste]."                       |
| "Analyse our sales data."                | "Analyse Q1 sales data. Top 3 growth categories and 2 largest declines. Table with percentage changes."                               |
| "Help me prepare for a meeting."         | "30-min meeting with CFO re budget overruns on Project X. 5 talking points, 2 mitigations, 3 questions."                              |