

The AI Prompt Cookbook

Practical, reusable prompts for every part of the organization

A working library of prompt patterns organized by the kind of work people actually do, from data and spreadsheets to project management, writing, planning, and organization. Each prompt is a starting point to copy, fill in the brackets, and refine. The goal is to give every team a few reliable patterns for their real tasks, not a tour of features.

The foundation: what makes any prompt work

Across every department, the same four-part structure separates a useful prompt from a vague one:

1. Context: who you are, who it is for, relevant background.
2. Task: the specific thing you want done.
3. Format: the structure, length, and tone you want back.
4. Constraints: what to include, avoid, or follow.

Every prompt below already follows this shape. Adapt the brackets to your situation and iterate if the first result misses.

Data & Spreadsheets

For analyzing data, building and fixing spreadsheets, and turning numbers into insight. (Always verify outputs and never paste sensitive or regulated data into an unapproved tool.)

Explain what a dataset is telling you

"Here is a table of [describe the data]. Summarize the 3 to 5 most important patterns or outliers a [role] would care about, in plain language, and flag anything that looks like a data-quality problem."

Write a spreadsheet formula

"In [Excel / Google Sheets], I need a formula that [describe the goal, e.g. looks up a value in column B and returns the matching value from column D, with a blank if not found]. Give me the formula and one sentence on how it works."

Build a pivot or summary plan

"I have a dataset with these columns: [list columns]. I want to understand [the question, e.g. revenue by region over time]. Tell me how to structure a pivot table (rows, columns, values) to answer it."

Clean messy data

"This column has inconsistent formatting [paste a few example values]. Tell me the steps or functions to standardize it (trimming spaces, fixing capitalization, converting text-formatted numbers), and what to watch out for."

Draft an analysis summary for leadership

"Turn these findings [paste the numbers or bullets] into a 4 to 5 sentence summary for [audience] who needs to decide [decision]. Lead with the takeaway, then the supporting points, then one recommended next step."

Project Management

For planning work, tracking progress, managing risk, and keeping initiatives on schedule.

Break a goal into a project plan

"I need to [the goal] by [date]. Break this into phases and key tasks, suggest a rough sequence and owners-by-role, and flag the 2 to 3 biggest risks to the timeline."

Draft a status update

"Write a concise status update for [audience] covering: what got done, what is in progress, what is blocked, and what is next. Here are my rough notes: [paste notes]. Keep it scannable."

Build a risk list

"For a project that [describe it], list the most likely risks. For each, give the potential impact and one practical mitigation. Range from obvious to easy-to-overlook."

Prep a kickoff or planning meeting

"I am kicking off [project] with [stakeholders]. Draft an agenda that covers goals, scope, roles, timeline, and decisions we need to make, timed for a [length] meeting."

Writing & Communication

For drafting, editing, and adapting written communication for any audience.

Generate a strong first draft

"You are [role]. Write a [length] [email / memo / post / announcement] about [topic] for [audience]. Use a [tone] tone. Include [must-haves]. Avoid [pitfalls]."

Improve something you have written

"Rewrite this to be [clearer / shorter / warmer / more formal]. Keep the meaning and any specific facts, and flag anything that reads as unclear or unsupported: [paste text]."

Adjust for a different audience

"Rewrite this message for [new audience] who cares about [their priorities] and may not know [assumed knowledge]: [paste text]."

Tighten a long message

"This is too long [paste text]. Cut it by about half while keeping the key points and the call to action. Tell me what you removed."

Planning & Strategy

For thinking through decisions, options, and approaches before committing.

Explore options with trade-offs

"Give me [number] distinct approaches to [challenge]. For each, note the main benefit and the main trade-off. Range from safe to bold."

Pressure-test an idea

"Here is my plan to [describe it]. Play devil's advocate: what are the strongest objections, the assumptions I am making, and what could go wrong that I have not considered?"

Turn a goal into a simple roadmap

"My goal is [goal]. Lay out a simple Now / Next / Later roadmap, with the few highest-impact moves in each, and note any dependencies."

Organization & Productivity

For getting organized, prioritizing, documenting, and reducing busywork.

Prioritize a messy task list

"Here is everything on my plate [paste list]. Help me prioritize using urgency and importance, flag anything I should delegate or drop, and suggest what to do first."

Turn notes into clear documentation

"Turn these rough notes into a clean, step-by-step how-to document that someone new could follow: [paste notes]. Use numbered steps and call out anything easy to get wrong."

Summarize a long document or thread

"Summarize the following for someone who needs to [decision or action]. Give me the key points, any decisions made, and open questions: [paste content]."

Draft a checklist for a recurring task

"I do [recurring task] regularly. Build a reusable checklist that covers every step and the quality checks, so it comes out right every time."

Meetings & Follow-Up

For preparing, running, and following up on meetings.

Turn a transcript or notes into actions

"From these meeting notes, pull out the decisions made and the action items with owners-by-role and due dates. Flag anything that was left unresolved: [paste notes]."

Prepare talking points

"I have a meeting with [who] about [topic]. Give me a tight set of talking points, the likely questions they will ask, and a clear ask or next step to close on."

The rules that apply to every prompt, in every department

- Verify before you trust: treat output as a draft, check facts and figures, and never paste sensitive, confidential, or regulated data into a tool that is not approved for it.
- Give context: the single biggest quality boost is telling the AI who you are, who it is for, and what good looks like.
- Iterate: if the first result misses, add the missing context rather than starting over.
- Keep what works: when a prompt produces a great result, save it. A team that shares its best prompts gets better together over time.