

AI Prompt Library

The Definitive Guide to AI Prompts That Actually Work

WORKSHOP

Reclaim Your Workweek Workshop

EVENT

Founded in FoCo 2026

PRESENTED BY

by Reuben 'Reu' Smith | Local Nerds

HOW AI PROMPTS ACTUALLY WORK

The 4-Part Formula That Changes Everything

Every great prompt has the same structure. Master this formula and you'll be able to customize any prompt for your exact business.

CONTEXT: Set the Stage

Tell the AI what it is, who it's talking to, and what situation you're in. Example: "You are an expert email writer. I manage 200 emails per day."

- **WHO** is the AI? (Expert, assistant, etc.)
- **WHO** are you? (Your role, volume, constraints)
- **WHAT'S** the situation? (Time crunch, quality issues, etc.)

INSTRUCTION: What to Do

Be explicit about the task. Vague instructions = vague output. "Write an email" fails. "Write a 2-sentence follow-up email with a specific question" works.

- **ACTION:** What should it actually do?
- **SCOPE:** How much detail? (1 sentence vs. 3 paragraphs)
- **WHO** gets it? (Client, boss, team)

FORMAT: How to Structure It

Format controls how usable your output is. "Put each email in a table with category and tone" beats "organize them."

- Output format (list, table, email, outline, etc.)
- Sections or structure you need
- Any specific order or grouping

CONSTRAINT: Set Boundaries

Constraints prevent scope creep and bad output. Without them, AI rambles. "Under 100 words" and "no jargon" are constraints that work.

- Length limits (words, sentences, etc.)
- Tone/style requirements (professional, casual, direct)
- What to exclude or avoid

CONTEXT + INSTRUCTION + FORMAT + CONSTRAINT = GREAT OUTPUT

Use this formula to debug bad outputs. If AI ignores your request, you're probably missing one of these four components. Fix it and rerun.

THREE ENTRY POINTS FOR EVERY SKILL LEVEL

Where to Start

Don't feel pressured to master all 14 prompts. Pick your entry point and go deep first.

BEGINNER: Email Triage (Prompt 1)

Fastest win. You'll reclaim 5+ hours per week immediately. This prompt just categorizes your inbox — copy, paste, done. Takes 2 minutes to set up.

- No customization needed to start
- Works with any AI tool (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini)
- Builds muscle memory for how prompts work

INTERMEDIATE: Meeting Prep (Prompt 7)

Most people skip this, but it transforms meetings. Takes 5 minutes to customize for your meeting style, then saves 10 hours per week on meeting prep and notes.

- Requires one-time customization (your meeting format)
- Combines with email triage for complete workflow
- Shows ROI immediately (better meetings = fewer follow-ups)

ADVANCED: Workflow Automation (Prompts 11-14)

For operators and business owners. These prompts work together to eliminate manual handoffs entirely. Requires understanding your full workflow first.

- Use after mastering 2-3 basic prompts
- Build custom workflows for your team
- Can save 15+ hours per week per person

WHICH TOOL SHOULD YOU USE?

These prompts work with any AI. Each tool has different strengths. Pick based on your task.

Tool	Best For	Strength
ChatGPT (OpenAI)	Email drafts, social media, brainstorming	Fast, creative, good at email tone
Claude (Anthropic)	Meeting Prep, Content Pipeline	Follows complex instructions precisely
Google Gemini	Invoice/Financial (with Google Sheets)	Data analysis, Google Workspace integration

Pro move: Use ChatGPT for first drafts (fast), Claude to refine (better), save both outputs. Best of both worlds.

Email Triage (The Foundation)

Start here. This is the entry point for everyone. Once you have this working, everything else gets faster.

PROMPT 1: Email Categorization

Skill Level: BEGINNER — 2 min setup | **Best with:** ChatGPT or Claude

PROMPT 1

```
I'm going to paste my recent emails below. Please categorize each one into exactly one of these four categories: VIP (from key clients, partners, time-sensitive), ACTION NEEDED (requires response but can be templated), FYI (informational, no response needed), ARCHIVE (newsletters, promotions, irrelevant). For each email, give me: Category | Sender | Subject | Suggested action (1 sentence). Here are my emails: [PASTE EMAILS HERE]
```

Customize This

Swap the categories to match YOUR business:

- If you manage a team, add: **DELEGATE** (forward to specific person)
- If you sell, change VIP to: **SALES OPPORTUNITY** (prospect or deal movement)
- If you run a service business, add: **CLIENT ISSUE** (needs same-day response)

If Your Output Sucks

Problem: AI mixes up VIP and ACTION NEEDED.

Fix: Add this constraint to your prompt: "VIP emails are ONLY from these people: [LIST YOUR VIP CLIENTS]. Everything else is ACTION NEEDED."

Before/After Example

BEFORE (VAGUE OUTPUT)	AFTER (ONE TWEAK)
VIP — Sales inquiry	VIP john@acme.com New \$50K deal
ACTION NEEDED — Check calendar	ACTION NEEDED sarah@co Invoice follow-up
FYI — Random category	ARCHIVE newsletter Delete and unsubscribe
No suggested actions	Specific next step for each
Wasted 20 min reading it	Ready to act in 5 min

The difference? "Give me: Category | Sender | Subject | Suggested action (1 sentence)." That FORMAT constraint made the output actionable.

PROMPT 2: Email Draft

Skill Level: BEGINNER — 3 min per email | **Best with:** ChatGPT

PROMPT 2

Draft a professional response to this email. Match my writing style: [direct / friendly / formal]. Keep it under 3 sentences unless the topic requires more. Include a clear next step or question if appropriate. Email to respond to: [PASTE EMAIL]

Customize This: Replace style, add signature, add links

If Your Output Sucks: Give the AI an example of your actual emails

PROMPT 3: Email Follow-Up

Skill Level: BEGINNER — 3 min per email | **Best with:** ChatGPT

PROMPT 3

I sent this email [X days ago] and haven't heard back. Draft a friendly follow-up that: (1) references the original topic briefly, (2) doesn't sound passive-aggressive, (3) includes a specific question to make replying easy, (4) is under 3 sentences. Original email: [PASTE ORIGINAL]

Customize This (Prompt 3)

Client vs internal vs cold outreach tone

If Your Output Sucks

Fix: Add constraint "Do NOT use words like urgent, asap, or important."

Get Paid On Time

A contractor used the payment reminder prompt and collected 95% of invoices on time (vs. 60% before).

PROMPT 4: Invoice Generation

Skill Level: BEGINNER — 5 min | **Best with:** Claude or Gemini

PROMPT 4

Create a professional invoice with these details: Client: [NAME], Project/Service: [DESCRIPTION], Hours/Deliverables: [LIST], Rate: [RATE], Due date: [DATE], Payment methods: [METHODS]. Format it clearly with line items, subtotal, any applicable tax, and total due. Invoice number: [NUMBER]. Your company: [NAME & ADDRESS].

PROMPT 5: Payment Reminder

Skill Level: BEGINNER — 2 min | **Best with:** ChatGPT

PROMPT 5

Draft a friendly payment reminder for an invoice that's [X days] overdue. Client: [CLIENT NAME], Amount: [AMOUNT], Invoice #: [NUMBER]. Keep it professional and warm. (1) Don't sound angry, (2) include the due date from the original invoice, (3) give them an easy link or payment option. Under 3 sentences.

PROMPT 6: Monthly Financial Summary

Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE — 5 min | **Best with:** Claude or Gemini

PROMPT 6

I'm sending my invoices and expenses for [MONTH/YEAR]. Create a summary that shows: (1) Total revenue, (2) Total expenses, (3) Net profit, (4) Top 3 clients by revenue, (5) Any overdue invoices, (6) Comparison to last month (% change). Format as: Label | Amount. Data: [PASTE INVOICE & EXPENSE LIST OR CSV]

Control Your Calendar

PROMPT 7: Meeting Agenda

Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE — 5 min setup | **Best with:** Claude

PROMPT 7

Create a focused meeting agenda for a [TYPE] meeting with [ATTENDEES]. Duration: [X] minutes. Topics: [TOPICS]. For each topic, include: (1) Time allocation, (2) What we're deciding or discussing, (3) Owner (who leads). End with clear next steps. Here's how I structure agendas: [YOUR TEMPLATE IF YOU HAVE ONE].

PROMPT 8: Meeting Notes Cleanup

Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE — 3 min | **Best with:** Claude

PROMPT 8

Clean up my meeting notes. Organize them into exactly these sections: (1) KEY DECISIONS MADE, (2) ACTION ITEMS (with owner and deadline in bold), (3) OPEN QUESTIONS, (4) NEXT STEPS. Raw notes: [PASTE YOUR MESSY NOTES]

Before/After: Messy Notes vs. Cleaned Notes

BEFORE (Messy Notes)	AFTER (Cleaned Up)
<p>talked about budget sarah said maybe 10k need to check with mike new vendor? follow up friday</p>	<p>KEY DECISIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget target: \$10K (pending Mike approval)• Exploring new vendor options <p>ACTION ITEMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sarah: Draft budget proposal, Due: Wed• Mike: Review & approve budget, Due: Thu <p>OPEN QUESTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which vendor to pursue? <p>NEXT STEPS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow-up meeting Friday

Fill Your Pipeline

PROMPT 9: Social Media Post

Skill Level: BEGINNER — 5 min | **Best with:** ChatGPT

PROMPT 9

Write a [PLATFORM] post about [TOPIC] for my business [YOUR BUSINESS TYPE]. Tone: [helpful/authoritative/casual/funny]. (1) Hook in first line, (2) 2-3 key points or takeaways, (3) End with question or CTA. Keep it under [WORD COUNT] words. Here's my voice: [PASTE 2 RECENT POSTS YOU WROTE].

PROMPT 10: Blog Post Outline

Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE — 10 min | **Best with:** Claude

PROMPT 10

Create a blog post outline for: Title: [TOPIC], Audience: [WHO], Goal: [WHAT]. Include: (1) 3 alternative headlines, (2) Introduction hook, (3) 5-7 main sections with 2-3 key points each, (4) Conclusion with specific CTA. Target word count: [NUMBER]. Here's my tone: [PASTE SAMPLE POST].

Customize This (Prompt 10)

- Replace [TOPIC] with your actual subject
- Add your brand voice sample for consistency
- Specify SEO keywords if targeting search
- Include competitor examples for differentiation

If Your Output Sucks

Problem: Outline is too generic or surface-level.

Fix: Add context: "My audience already knows the basics. Focus on advanced tactics and specific examples from [YOUR INDUSTRY]."

Close More Deals & Keep Clients Happy

PROMPT 11: Client Update Email

Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE — 5 min | **Best with:** ChatGPT

PROMPT 11

Write a status update email to [CLIENT NAME] about [PROJECT]. Include: (1) What we completed this week, (2) What we're starting next week, (3) Any blockers or decisions needed from them, (4) Next checkpoint. Tone: [professional / friendly / brief]. Keep it under 3 paragraphs.

PROMPT 12: Proposal Outline

Skill Level: ADVANCED — 30 min first time | **Best with:** Claude

PROMPT 12

Create a proposal outline for [CLIENT] to [YOUR SERVICE]. Include sections: (1) The Problem, (2) Why They're Losing Money, (3) Our Solution, (4) Timeline & Deliverables, (5) Investment & Payment Terms, (6) Why Us. Context: Their main pain, our unique angle, price range, decision timeline.

Customize This (Prompt 12)

- Add your company's unique selling points
- Include specific case study references
- Tailor the "Why They're Losing Money" section to their industry
- Add your standard payment terms as a constraint

If Your Output Sucks

Problem: Proposal sounds generic.

Fix: Add this to your prompt: "Use specific details from our discovery call: [PASTE NOTES]. Reference their exact pain points by name."

Operate at Scale

PROMPT 13: Content Calendar (Bulk)

Skill Level: ADVANCED — 30 min/quarter | **Best with:** Claude

PROMPT 13

Create a 3-month content calendar for my [PLATFORM]. [FREQUENCY]. Topics: [TOPICS]. Format: Date | Topic | Format | CTA | Owner. Make sure: topics rotate, no repeats in same month, balance promotional/educational, align with [GOAL].

PROMPT 14: Task List (Bulk Process)

Skill Level: ADVANCED — 15 min setup | **Best with:** Claude

PROMPT 14

I have [NUMBER] [ITEMS] to process. Turn this list into a task breakdown: For each item, create a task with (1) Owner, (2) Action, (3) Deadline, (4) Dependency. Items: [PASTE LIST] Use template: Owner | Action | Deadline | Depends on

Customize This (Prompt 14)

- Add team member names so AI can assign owners
- Include your sprint length or project timeline
- Specify priority levels (P1/P2/P3) if needed

If Your Output Sucks

Problem: Tasks are too vague or too granular.

Fix: Add constraint: "Each task should take 1-4 hours. If a task is bigger, break it into subtasks. If smaller, combine with related tasks."

BUILD YOUR OWN PROMPT

Template: Fill in the Blanks

Use this 4-step template to create any prompt from scratch.

STEP 1: CONTEXT

1. You are a [ROLE/EXPERT TYPE].
2. I am a [YOUR ROLE] at a [COMPANY TYPE].
3. The situation is [WHAT'S HAPPENING].

STEP 2: INSTRUCTION

4. [ACTION VERB]: [WHAT YOU WANT DONE].
5. The audience is [WHO RECEIVES THIS].
6. The goal is [WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE].

STEP 3: FORMAT

7. Format as [LIST / TABLE / EMAIL / OUTLINE / etc.].
8. Include these sections: [SECTION NAMES].
9. Order by [PRIORITY / DATE / CATEGORY].

STEP 4: CONSTRAINT

10. Keep it under [WORD/SENTENCE LIMIT].
11. Tone: [PROFESSIONAL / CASUAL / DIRECT].
12. Do NOT include [WHAT TO AVOID].

Chain Prompts Together for Maximum Impact

Workflow 1: Email to Action (5 min)

→ Prompt 1 (Categorize inbox) → Prompt 2 (Draft responses) → Prompt 3 (Follow-ups)

Start with triage, draft the ACTION NEEDED responses, then queue follow-ups for anything pending.

Workflow 2: Content Pipeline (30 min/quarter)

→ Prompt 13 (Content Calendar) → Prompt 10 (Blog Outlines) → Prompt 9 (Social Posts)

Plan the quarter, outline each piece, then create social posts that promote each blog. One session, 3 months of content.

Workflow 3: Meeting to Execution (15 min/week)

→ Prompt 7 (Agenda) → Prompt 8 (Notes Cleanup) → Prompt 14 (Task Breakdown)

Build the agenda before, clean up notes after, then convert action items into tracked tasks.

Pattern: Plan → Execute → Cleanup → Assign

WHEN PROMPTS FAIL

Troubleshooting Guide

Problem	Fix
Output is too vague	Add FORMAT: "Give me a table with columns: X, Y, Z"
Output is too long	Add CONSTRAINT: "Under 100 words" or "3 sentences max"
AI ignores instructions	Break into numbered steps: "(1) Do X, (2) Then Y, (3) Finally Z"
Wrong tone	Give example: "Match this tone: [paste your actual writing]"
Hallucinating facts	Add: "Only use information I provide. Do not make up data."
Output doesn't match your business	Add CONTEXT: Your role, industry, team size, specific constraints

Golden rule: If the output sucks, it's not the AI's fault. It's your prompt. Add the missing component (Context, Instruction, Format, or Constraint) and try again.

This Actually Works (Proof)

Home Remodeling Company

Used Email Triage (Prompt 1) + Client Update (Prompt 11). Result: Cut email time from 2 hours/day to 30 minutes. Client satisfaction scores went up because updates were consistent and timely.

Insurance Agency

Used Meeting Prep (Prompt 7) + Notes Cleanup (Prompt 8). Result: Meetings went from 60 minutes average to 35 minutes. Follow-through on action items improved from 40% to 90%.

Service Business

Used Content Calendar (Prompt 13) + Social Posts (Prompt 9). Result: Went from posting 2x/month to 3x/week. Lead inquiries increased 40% in 90 days with zero additional ad spend.

REFERENCE & RESOURCES

Quick Reference

#	Prompt Name	Level	Time
1	Email Categorization	Beginner	2 min
2	Email Draft	Beginner	3 min
3	Email Follow-Up	Beginner	3 min
4	Invoice Generation	Beginner	5 min
5	Payment Reminder	Beginner	2 min
6	Monthly Financial Summary	Intermediate	5 min
7	Meeting Agenda	Intermediate	5 min
8	Meeting Notes Cleanup	Intermediate	3 min
9	Social Media Post	Beginner	5 min
10	Blog Post Outline	Intermediate	10 min
11	Client Update Email	Intermediate	5 min
12	Proposal Outline	Advanced	30 min
13	Content Calendar	Advanced	30 min
14	Task List	Advanced	15 min

What to Do Right Now

1. Pick ONE prompt (start with Prompt 1 if unsure)
2. Open ChatGPT or Claude
3. Copy the prompt, paste your data, hit enter
4. See what happens. Tweak the prompt. Run again.
5. Once it works, save it as a template for next time

Other Resources

- Workshop slides and templates: localnerds.co/fifc2026
- Full workshop materials: Available at the resource hub
- Questions? reu@localnerds.co

The best prompt is the one you actually use. Start small, build momentum, and automate the work your

team hates.

Your Next Step

You now have 14 battle-tested prompts, a formula for building your own, and a troubleshooting guide for when things go wrong.

The difference between people who save 10+ hours per week with AI and people who don't? **They actually use the prompts.**

Pick one. Run it today. See what happens.

Need help?

Email: reu@localnerds.co

Resources: localnerds.co/fifc2026

Workshop: Reclaim Your Workweek — Founded in FoCo 2026