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Pathways & Practice

- 01 Foundation & Understanding of AI
- 02 Prompting and Hands-On Practice
- 03 Inspiration & Next Steps



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AI in Action: You're in the Driver's Seat





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Vague Prompt = Vague Response

Write an email to my team.



"Hi team,
I hope you're doing well. I wanted to send an email to check in. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
(Your Name)

Feels generic, unclear, and not very useful.



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Better Prompt = Better Response

You are a supportive team leader. Write a short, upbeat email to your team thanking them for their hard work on a recent deadline. Mention staying late to finish reports and encourage them to take time to recharge. Keep it warm and motivating.

"Hi team,
I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for the incredible effort you put in to meet our recent deadline. I know many of you stayed late to finalize reports and it truly showed in the quality of our work.
Please take some time this week to recharge-- you've absolutely earned it. I'm grateful to be a part of such a dedicated and supportive team!
Best,
(Your Name)"



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Better Prompt = Better Response

- S** **Specific** - Have I clearly defined what I want?
- P** **Purpose** - Do I know the goal or outcome?
- E** **Expected Outcome** - Did I explain how I want the response to be formatted?
- C** **Critical Info** - Have I explained what matters most?
- S** **Scope** - Did I include any parameters?



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Pick a Scenario & Bring it to Life

- Writing emails or text with specific tone
- Resume or job search help (ATS-proof)
- Planning meals with dietary restrictions or fitness goals

- Organizing your week
- Time Management
- Planning Trips

- Explaining (or summarizing) something confusing at an appropriate level



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Pick a Scenario & Bring it to Life

Prompt Sample: Plan a 3-day affordable trip to San Diego for a couple. Include a daily itinerary, under \$1,000 including hotel, food and outdoor activities.



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Idea Spark Station

- Publishing Books
- Social media & hashtag usage
- Create your own GTP
- Presentation & tech support
- Email Makeovers
- Meeting Magic
- Study Tools, Guides, & Tips
- Organize ideas



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Prompt Engineering Toolkit

Step 1: AI works best when you give it clear direction. Don't simply ask. Guide.

SPECS Approach

- Situation → What's happening?
- Purpose → What's the goal?
- Expectations → What do you want?
- Constraints → What are the limits?
- Style → How should it sound?

Prompt Formula: "Given [Situation], the goal is to [Purpose]. Provide [Expectations] Keep it [Constraints]. Use a [Style] tone."



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Clear prompts lead to clear results.

Prompt Engineering Toolkit

Step 2: Refine

- "Make this more concise" "Adjust tone to be more conversational"
- "Add examples" "Rewrite for a beginner audience" "Turn this into bullet points"

Try to avoid being too vague, asking too much at once, and/or not refining the output.

Reminders:

- Don't include sensitive or private information
- Double-check important details and sources
- Use AI to **support** your thinking, not replace it and **BE CREATIVE!**



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Clear prompts lead to clear results.

Resources



Prompt Engineering Specialization (Vanderbilt University) – Coursera
Comprehensive series covering foundational and advanced prompt engineering skills.
<https://www.coursera.org/specializations/prompt-engineering>

Prompt Engineering for ChatGPT (Vanderbilt University) – Coursera
Focused course on prompt design, templates, and LLM interaction techniques.
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/prompt-engineering>

Generative AI: Prompt Engineering Basics (IBM) – Coursera
Intro to generative AI and practical prompt engineering strategies.
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/generative-ai-prompt-engineering-for-everyone>

Prompt Engineering & Programming with OpenAI (Columbia University) - Columbia+
Course on prompt engineering and API-based development.
<https://plus.columbia.edu/content/prompt-engineering-programming-openai>



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Resources



Allan Hancock College Information Technology Services. Data Security. Allan Hancock College.
<https://hancockcollege.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2283/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=154488>

Allan Hancock College Information Technology Services. Guidelines on Exposing Data in Web Forms and AI Tools. Allan Hancock College,
<https://hancockcollege.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2283/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=169200>

Gadesha, Vrunda. "The 2026 Guide to Prompt Engineering." IBM Think, IBM,
<https://www.ibm.com/think/prompt-engineering>



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