

Transcript | AI Skills Lab: AI for Better Briefings

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00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:01.390

Amelia Paltridge: Hello!

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00:00:03.010 --> 00:00:18.980

Amelia Paltridge: Hello, everyone. Welcome. I will give you all a moment to just come join us in the room today. It is lovely to have you here. Welcome to this AI Skills Lab event on AI for Better Briefings.

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00:00:18.980 --> 00:00:23.539

Amelia Paltridge: My name is Amelia Paltridge, I'm a Community Manager here at Apolitical

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00:00:23.760 --> 00:00:42.970

Amelia Paltridge: And today, we are looking at how AI can help you turn raw information into a clear, decision-ready briefing. We'll walk through a repeatable workflow for mapping your brief, spotting gaps in the evidence, stress testing your advice, and keeping the final recommendation firmly in human hands.

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00:00:42.990 --> 00:00:56.739

Amelia Paltridge: For those of you who may be joining us for the first time, welcome! Apolitical is the world's largest network for government, and it's used by more than half a million public servants and policymakers across 170 different countries.

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00:00:56.880 --> 00:01:20.349

Amelia Paltridge: It's a strategic partner to governments, helping them prepare their workforces for the future, and we achieve this by upskilling through short online courses and peer communities, as well as by building innovative learning tools designed for and with governments. It would be really great to hear from you all as well, too, so do post in the chat where you're joining us from, what organization you work for.

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00:01:20.350 --> 00:01:26.559

Amelia Paltridge: Pop those intros in the chat, and it's great for us to see who is in the room with us today.

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00:01:26.560 --> 00:01:35.289

Amelia Paltridge: And while you are introducing yourselves, I will get a few quick bits of housekeeping out of the way before we get into today's session.

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00:01:35.490 --> 00:01:43.399

Amelia Paltridge: So firstly, I'll mention that this event is recorded for on-demand viewing on the Apolitical website, so please don't record it yourself.

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00:01:43.400 --> 00:01:58.229

Amelia Paltridge: We'll also be using the recording to generate events insights, including with AI-powered software, so as this session is running on a Zoom webinar, we won't collect your video or audio data, but personal data you share in the chat may be captured.

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00:01:58.290 --> 00:02:14.590

Amelia Paltridge: Contact details for privacy concerns are in the Apolitical homepage footer, and closed captions are available in your own language, and can be toggled on or off in your screen settings as well. My colleague will post the instructions in the chat for that.

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00:02:15.480 --> 00:02:21.489

Amelia Paltridge: Secondly, I would love to introduce you to the AI in government community on Apolitical

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00:02:21.610 --> 00:02:31.920

Amelia Paltridge: This is a space to ask questions, like those you think of during today's event, or share best practice, such as sharing your best prompts, or how you instruct your LLM.

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00:02:31.920 --> 00:02:42.680

Amelia Paltridge: If you have ever wondered about these, you're definitely not alone, and this community is such a great place to connect with and learn with your peers in the public sector from around the world.

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00:02:42.680 --> 00:02:51.800

Amelia Paltridge: So my colleague will also post the link to the community in the chat for you to access there, and you can also search for it on the Apolitical website.

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00:02:51.870 --> 00:03:08.489

Amelia Paltridge: Thank you so much for those who have just jumped on and joined us. As I've been going through those instructions, I've also asked everyone to pop a little intro in the chat, letting us know who you are, where you're joining us from, just so we can see the span of who is in the room today.

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00:03:08.490 --> 00:03:14.189

Amelia Paltridge: And yes, this will be recorded. I can see that question in the chat.

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00:03:14.360 --> 00:03:18.439

Amelia Paltridge: So get those introductions coming. Thank you, everyone.

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00:03:18.700 --> 00:03:37.330

Amelia Paltridge: It's lovely to see you all today. Before we introduce our speaker, I am going to run a quick poll, just to get a sense of your use of AI. So you should see it pop up on your screen. How often do you use generative AI tools in your work?

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00:03:37.460 --> 00:03:40.920

Amelia Paltridge: How often do you use generative AI tools in your work?

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00:03:41.040 --> 00:03:48.930

Amelia Paltridge: There's a few choices you can pick there. Daily, weekly, monthly, rarely, or never.

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00:03:49.590 --> 00:04:03.789

Amelia Paltridge: Feel free to be as honest as possible, this poll is anonymous, it's just for us to get a sense of how you are all feeling, so we can tailor the advice and the insights on this, call today for you.

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00:04:04.360 --> 00:04:08.370

Amelia Paltridge: I'll give you all another moment just to answer that.

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00:04:08.890 --> 00:04:10.459

Amelia Paltridge: And then we can have a look.

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00:04:10.670 --> 00:04:11.780

Amelia Paltridge: at the spread.

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00:04:15.090 --> 00:04:32.130

Amelia Paltridge: Wonderful. So, we have at the top there, just over half of you daily are using generative AI tools in your work, which is really, really interesting to see and great to see, so hopefully you'll be able to maybe even share some tips, but also gain some new tips.

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00:04:32.130 --> 00:04:40.570

Amelia Paltridge: As well, to really maximize the usefulness of that in your work. Then, second, we've got weekly there.

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00:04:40.650 --> 00:04:48.979

Amelia Paltridge: I'm just going down. It's great to see that, a lot of you are using it pretty regularly in your work, so this should be super useful and applicable.

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00:04:48.980 --> 00:05:03.419

Amelia Paltridge: To you all, thank you so much for taking the time to answer that. Now I'm going to introduce our speaker today. We are so fortunate to have the brilliant guest Brent Kerrigan joining us today.

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00:05:03.420 --> 00:05:08.279

Amelia Paltridge: Brent is an executive speech writer and AI for leadership communications trainer.

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00:05:08.290 --> 00:05:20.130

Amelia Paltridge: He spent more than a decade in the Canadian Federal Public Service before working internationally with government, UN, business leaders, including 6 years as head speechwriter at UN Climate Change.

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00:05:20.170 --> 00:05:30.590

Amelia Paltridge: Today, he continues to write for senior leaders while training communications professionals and teams to use AI effectively without surrendering human judgment, voice, or responsibility.

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00:05:30.760 --> 00:05:38.160

Amelia Paltridge: You can read his full bio by visiting the Resources tab at the bottom of your Zoom screen and heading to the Speakers section.

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00:05:38.620 --> 00:05:56.160

Amelia Paltridge: Wonderful, thank you so much. Brent, it is a pleasure to have you with us. I am now going to hand over to you for the next 15 minutes, and then afterwards, we're going to have a few minutes reserved for Q&A, so attendees, do submit your questions for Brent that might come up as he speaks in the Q&A tab.

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00:05:56.160 --> 00:05:58.890

Amelia Paltridge: Brent, over to you, the floor is yours.

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00:05:59.270 --> 00:06:15.810

Brent Kerrigan: Well, thank you very much, Amelia, and welcome to everybody. I have done a few Apolitical events before, and it's a real pleasure to be back. Now, I saw a lot of Canadian names and locations popping up on that screen, of course, from places elsewhere as well, so...

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00:06:15.810 --> 00:06:22.200

Brent Kerrigan: Hi to all my former GOC colleagues, and of course, welcome to all of you as well.

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00:06:22.200 --> 00:06:31.690

Brent Kerrigan: Now, before we get into the heart of this, I do want to make one thing clear. I've been working in communications for, as Amelia pointed out, for a number of years now.

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00:06:31.690 --> 00:06:46.090

Brent Kerrigan: And I therefore look at almost everything through a communication sort of lens. But don't worry, everything we're discussing today and as we talk about Briefings Notes and AI, it really is widely applicable. So no worries there.

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00:06:46.350 --> 00:07:11.160

Brent Kerrigan: So, in my role as a speechwriter, I've seen a lot of Briefing Notes. Speechwriters tend to get these in information packages, you know, the information that we need to use to write speeches. So, I've seen more than my fair share of these things. And I'm going to be brutally honest with you here. Some were decent, but most were not. Not even close. Some were complete train wrecks. And when they failed, I found that they usually

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00:07:11.160 --> 00:07:34.439

Brent Kerrigan: failed in about three ways, if we're really to group these broadly. The first one is, well, I think pretty simple. They're packed with information, right? They're just... they're overwritten. Five pages where one would do every single bit of background is just packed into that thing. Anything anybody could find is in there, right? And it often, to me, when I saw these, it raised questions about

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00:07:34.490 --> 00:07:47.650

Brent Kerrigan: Who exactly is this note for? Is it for the executive, or is it really about the writer trying to show how smart they are, show how accomplished they are? You know, these things are not resumes, they were never meant to do that.

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00:07:47.680 --> 00:08:12.579

Brent Kerrigan: Second reason I think a lot of Briefing Notes fail is because, look, again, being honest, laziness. Laziness. I saw a few that looked like the person had just gone on to Google and just slapped together whatever they could find. You know, if we're talking about pre-AI days, they would take whatever they found there and slap it on, call it a Briefing Note, different fonts, different colours for headlines.

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00:08:12.580 --> 00:08:13.410

Brent Kerrigan: lines.

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00:08:13.410 --> 00:08:26.669

Brent Kerrigan: Again, a bit of a mess. And you may think I'm exaggerating, but again, I've seen many of these, and it happens more times than you think it might. The information is in there somewhere, but there's no focus.

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00:08:26.760 --> 00:08:40.720

Brent Kerrigan: And all of this again happened in the pre-AI era, which really raises the next point. The third reason I think Briefings Notes have been failing lately, well, you might have guessed it, people are using AI to write the whole darn thing.

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00:08:42.200 --> 00:09:04.239

Brent Kerrigan: we've seen these as well, right? Perfect formatting. Bullet points that... that are perfectly crafted, horizontal lines even, copied over from Claude, and... and if they're as blatant as some of the people that I've been working with in the past, sometimes even an emoji or two gets packed into that as well, and passed off as

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00:09:04.240 --> 00:09:11.900

Brent Kerrigan: Original work. Now, if you see Briefing Notes like these, I would highly recommend to do what I do and hit the delete button, because

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00:09:11.920 --> 00:09:25.420

Brent Kerrigan: I don't find that they're going to be useful, they're not trustworthy, because if they can't... the way I see it, if they can't bother fixing a lot of the formatting, then how am I going to trust that they know what the facts are, or they've

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00:09:25.420 --> 00:09:38.199

Brent Kerrigan: Actually double-checked whatever AI kicked out to them. The point is, I can't. And that's going to damage, well, me, my organization, and especially the person it's supposed to be for, the executive.

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00:09:38.290 --> 00:09:39.200

Brent Kerrigan: Now.

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00:09:40.160 --> 00:09:53.090

Brent Kerrigan: Mini rant over. Look, clearly I think that there's a role for AI in not only communications, but Briefing Notes. I wouldn't be here if I didn't think that.

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00:09:53.220 --> 00:09:59.470

Brent Kerrigan: But... I think that the role is not to replace you or your judgment.

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00:09:59.610 --> 00:10:05.400

Brent Kerrigan: Just like most things in life, this is all about balance, right? Let's quickly look at what...

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00:10:05.820 --> 00:10:18.709

Brent Kerrigan: What should go in a briefing note, right, if we're really going to boil it down? Three things. Intention. What am I... if we're the executive thinking this, what am I supposed to understand, to decide, or to approve?

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00:10:18.840 --> 00:10:28.929

Brent Kerrigan: Context. What do I need to know to make a decision? What's known? What isn't known? An authority. What's mine to decide? What's out of my hands? What's recommended?

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00:10:29.330 --> 00:10:47.579

Brent Kerrigan: Now, coincidentally, and the reason I brought this up is because these are exactly the same three things we need for any modern interaction with AI today, especially as we're moving on, as we are, past prompt engineering. We're doing things a lot different now, we don't need to give it as many instructions.

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00:10:47.590 --> 00:10:59.359

Brent Kerrigan: I think about what we do with AI right now and what it needs to know. Intention. What are we trying to accomplish? Context. What does the AI need to know that it couldn't possibly know on its own?

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00:10:59.560 --> 00:11:04.930

Brent Kerrigan: Authority. What can AI handle on its own, and where is our judgment needed?

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00:11:05.470 --> 00:11:11.570

Brent Kerrigan: So you really think about it, getting Briefing Notes right is the same as getting AI right.

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00:11:12.200 --> 00:11:19.099

Brent Kerrigan: All right, let's take a deeper look now at how we bring these all together for better Briefings Notes.

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00:11:19.840 --> 00:11:35.809

Brent Kerrigan: What I'm going to show you next is a set of instructions that will work for 99% of what you need to draft a better Briefing Note. I'm going to switch over to a page that I have designed for everybody that's taking part in this discussion.

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00:11:35.810 --> 00:11:44.190

Brent Kerrigan: And it's at, if it hasn't been shared in the chat, it's BrentKerrigan.com backslash Apolitical. Alright.

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00:11:45.210 --> 00:11:46.180

Brent Kerrigan: At.

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00:11:46.290 --> 00:11:58.460

Brent Kerrigan: Every note that... everything we've talked about so far is in here, everything we're going to talk about is in here as well, but I want to scroll down to the actual set of instructions that we'll need to draft better prompts.

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00:11:58.620 --> 00:12:16.439

Brent Kerrigan: First thing I want to say, yeah, it's really long, I know, but it's also very thorough. I guarantee you it works. I've run this thing over and over the last few days and the past weeks before that. The instructions are there for you to copy. Don't worry, you don't have to write it all again. I've done it for you.

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00:12:17.470 --> 00:12:36.660

Brent Kerrigan: But instead of reading it to you, let's go over the highlights. This is what it essentially does. This is a Q&A-based format, which is my preferred way to use AI. Instead of me just telling the AI what I want and hoping it's going to deliver everything back, it deliberately asks me questions to guide me forward.

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00:12:36.830 --> 00:12:40.810

Brent Kerrigan: It begins with permissions, right? Right here.

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00:12:41.070 --> 00:12:57.500

Brent Kerrigan: And it asks to make sure that all the information we're working on together is clear to use. Now, I don't know what yours are, and you'll have to figure that out on your end, but what I can say is that I've designed this to generally work on both closed and open systems.

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00:12:57.830 --> 00:13:04.049

Brent Kerrigan: Then it'll ask, of course, for source information. What are the facts that it needs to do this job?

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00:13:04.290 --> 00:13:16.819

Brent Kerrigan: It then goes through what we have already discussed, and we don't need to dig any deeper on that here. It'll ask you a series of questions about intention, context, authority.

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00:13:16.940 --> 00:13:20.350

Brent Kerrigan: Not as a checklist, but as a guide. Excuse me.

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00:13:22.350 --> 00:13:24.630

Brent Kerrigan: Then, as we look down.

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00:13:24.980 --> 00:13:37.220

Brent Kerrigan: We ask it to make sure it builds a briefing map for us, where it states out facts, risks, stakeholders, gaps, and any unresolved issues that may exist as we work through it.

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00:13:37.550 --> 00:13:43.510

Brent Kerrigan: And this is the part that, well, I think is most important. It stops.

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00:13:43.700 --> 00:13:45.100

Brent Kerrigan: And it stops...

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00:13:45.500 --> 00:13:53.079

Brent Kerrigan: For a human decision to be made, where it asks, what do you recommend? You, the human, and why do you recommend this?

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00:13:54.230 --> 00:14:08.750

Brent Kerrigan: I then, of course, made it a bit of a pain in the butt, so it challenges that recommendation as well. So you really work through this together. This is a collaborative approach. This is not about you plugging in something and getting a direct answer back.

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00:14:08.920 --> 00:14:22.900

Brent Kerrigan: All right, clear up that. Once you get the recommendation sorted out, it then gives you some writer's notes, some suggestions for how you can get started writing this thing. And I really do think that's your job, our job, my job.

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00:14:23.250 --> 00:14:42.369

Brent Kerrigan: However, I do want to point this out. You'll see at the end, there's a bit on drafting. Now, I want to be clear about this. I don't think you should include this in your instructions. I think it's a slippery slope. But I also think we're adults capable of making our own decisions. Some really want this as an option, as an example to work with.

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00:14:42.370 --> 00:14:55.410

Brent Kerrigan: And if you're going to go down this path, at least we have the instructions for repeatable instructions so that we see this thing look the same every time we do it. It has the different sections set up.

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00:14:56.270 --> 00:14:57.280

Brent Kerrigan: Okay.

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00:14:57.440 --> 00:14:59.590

Brent Kerrigan: I get it,

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00:14:59.790 --> 00:15:08.220

Brent Kerrigan: This is, understandably, an event briefing rather than a classic policy decision note, but the same discipline applies.

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00:15:08.430 --> 00:15:22.820

Brent Kerrigan: And to show you how it runs, and I'm going to switch over to an AI model to show you that, I need to give it a scenario. I can't just plug in these instructions with no context at all. So I've created a fictional scenario for you.

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00:15:23.190 --> 00:15:31.320

Brent Kerrigan: We're going to pretend our name is Casey, and we work in communications for a company that deals in logistics.

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00:15:31.550 --> 00:15:42.599

Brent Kerrigan: Casey shows up in a lot of my workshops. I really put her through a whole range of challenges when it comes to AI. And if she was a real person, she would not be happy.

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00:15:42.600 --> 00:15:54.329

Brent Kerrigan: probably to work with me. In any case, our fictional CAICE CEO, Daniela Mercer, has accepted a panel invitation at a UN General Assembly side event.

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00:15:54.400 --> 00:16:09.780

Brent Kerrigan: On climate. But Danielle is new to climate. She's never spoken about climate. She's therefore asked Casey to produce a briefing note that addresses the, you know, the usual questions. What's the event? What matters? And how should I position myself?

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00:16:09.880 --> 00:16:11.509

Brent Kerrigan: And the organization.

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00:16:12.180 --> 00:16:15.979

Brent Kerrigan: Alright, let's take a look at how we run this.

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00:16:17.360 --> 00:16:22.150

Brent Kerrigan: Right now, you should be able to see my screen, and it's in Perplexity.

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00:16:22.240 --> 00:16:34.329

Brent Kerrigan: All right. Why am I choosing Perplexity over any of the seemingly hundreds of AI models now? Well, because I used ChatGPT yesterday and Claude the day before that.

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00:16:34.330 --> 00:16:42.250

Brent Kerrigan: The point is it works on all open or closed systems for most major AI models.

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00:16:42.600 --> 00:16:51.110

Brent Kerrigan: I've also already pre-run this. Why? Because you don't want to be watching a spinning ball when we have about 15 minutes to really go through this.

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00:16:51.150 --> 00:17:05.339

Brent Kerrigan: Let's look and see how this interview unfolds and if it actually did what we asked it to do, right? Did this Q&A format actually work? So the first thing we need to look at is, well, we asked it to check permissions first.

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00:17:05.730 --> 00:17:15.150

Brent Kerrigan: Oh, let me just back up a bit. The first box, that's just the instructions. I just copied and pasted that over. Nothing, nothing has changed.

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00:17:15.260 --> 00:17:21.250

Brent Kerrigan: So, permissions, yes. It's already asked us about that, so thumbs up there.

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00:17:21.390 --> 00:17:25.660

Brent Kerrigan: Sources and factual information? Yep, ask for those too.

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00:17:25.849 --> 00:17:26.849

Brent Kerrigan: Now...

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00:17:27.280 --> 00:17:47.020

Brent Kerrigan: I had to make, because this is a fictional scenario, and I'd already gone down this road, I had to then give it a whole bunch of facts to work with. So, all of the things that you see in this box are made up, for use so that we can see how this runs. Yours are obviously going to be different. The point is, you need to put that stuff in there.

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00:17:48.670 --> 00:17:50.180

Brent Kerrigan: It will then...

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00:17:50.290 --> 00:18:09.349

Brent Kerrigan: go through intention, context, and authority, right? We've already discussed, again, we don't need to read all of those. What I want to do, though, is to go down, and if... I know I'm running through this rather quickly, if there are questions at the end, I am more than happy to explain any of these sections in depth.

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00:18:09.590 --> 00:18:12.229

Brent Kerrigan: Briefing map. That's what I want to get to.

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00:18:12.860 --> 00:18:26.099

Brent Kerrigan: This, I find extremely helpful, right? It sets out a path forward. It sets out the points, the evidence, the limits, the risks, the trade-offs, the stakeholders, and what still needs resolution.

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00:18:26.340 --> 00:18:29.619

Brent Kerrigan: And then, just like we asked it to, it stops.

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00:18:30.110 --> 00:18:32.519

Brent Kerrigan: Human decision required.

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00:18:32.870 --> 00:18:33.780

Brent Kerrigan: Okay.

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00:18:33.970 --> 00:18:51.399

Brent Kerrigan: It asked Casey for her recommendation, and I will fully admit, I threw perplexity a curveball here. You can say that I, you know, hallucinated. Fair play, right? I deliberately gave it a bad recommendation. I wanted to see if it would catch it.

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00:18:51.550 --> 00:19:06.079

Brent Kerrigan: I recommended that we should base the entire briefing note on an impressive-sounding number. That the company's emissions, remember our fake logistics company? That our company's emissions were 24% lower in 2025,

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00:19:06.210 --> 00:19:13.529

Brent Kerrigan: Then, 2020 baseline, whatever. The problem? Legal hadn't cleared that number. We have no idea if that's actually true.

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00:19:13.730 --> 00:19:16.179

Brent Kerrigan: Did the system catch it? Well...

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00:19:16.520 --> 00:19:33.980

Brent Kerrigan: It did. It said, this is an uncleared claim, and you can't put it at the center of Daniela's approach. Even if legal clears it, it's going to, you know, confuse the audience, and... and so, that was... that was really, really helpful if I'm doing this in real life.

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00:19:34.190 --> 00:19:41.309

Brent Kerrigan: I went back, I agreed, And I changed the recommendation for my briefing note.

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00:19:41.460 --> 00:19:45.360

Brent Kerrigan: Okay? Now, why is that important? Why is any of this important?

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00:19:45.670 --> 00:20:00.390

Brent Kerrigan: Because I think it demonstrates how it upholds human authority. I am not a fan of just pawning off my work onto AI, and that I'm left out of it. I don't understand why they wouldn't replace me with a bot if that's how I used it.

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00:20:00.730 --> 00:20:20.439

Brent Kerrigan: I'd like to work through this collaboratively. It didn't choose the answer for me. I chose. It made me defend my choice, and then after realizing I was wrong, I changed it accordingly. I think it's better to catch this stuff now than later, and way better than just plugging in whatever AI tells us to plug in.

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00:20:21.030 --> 00:20:29.619

Brent Kerrigan: All right. Once Casey has dealt with all this, you'll see what we asked for before. Here's some writer's notes to get her started.

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00:20:30.960 --> 00:20:53.279

Brent Kerrigan: And if you want, you can also have an example of how that should be laid out. Again, this is just a suggestion. I can't leave well enough alone, even though I didn't want it, I did then go back and say, you know what, that doesn't look good, I want you to do it again. So, you can, you can really... you can have some fun with this, and you can iterate with it as much as you like.

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00:20:54.440 --> 00:21:05.569

Brent Kerrigan: All right, back face-to-face. I know, a lot there. Again, we can talk about some of these in just, I guess, about 2 minutes, because I want to raise one more thing before we get to the questions.

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00:21:06.470 --> 00:21:24.149

Brent Kerrigan: Two more things, actually. For many briefing notes, what I just showed you is honestly more than enough. I think it's going to solve most of the issues that you have with briefing notes. But on the webpage, again, the link should be in the chat somewhere. If not, we'll share it again at the end.

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00:21:24.290 --> 00:21:32.479

Brent Kerrigan: I've also given you a much more advanced version that is really, really helpful if you've got a complex or multi-layered event.

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00:21:33.150 --> 00:21:47.150

Brent Kerrigan: Think about a national rollout, I remember doing this in the government of Canada, you've got regional announcements, or regional decisions that need to be made. It does everything we did here, that prompt I'm giving you, or the set of instructions, but much, much more.

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00:21:47.290 --> 00:21:54.839

Brent Kerrigan: We focus on this all the time in our team's approach, but it's beyond the scope of today's presentation. But it's there if you want to give it a shot.

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00:21:55.240 --> 00:21:57.790

Brent Kerrigan: Finally, before you go.

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00:21:58.410 --> 00:22:16.279

Brent Kerrigan: I want to raise a point that just came up recently, and it really underlines everything we've been talking about, and why we do these briefing notes, and why they're called brief in the first place. I recently called a... I joined a call with a senior communi... a group of senior communicators from academia, private sector, public sector.

127

00:22:16.290 --> 00:22:27.450

Brent Kerrigan: And the Director told us, and she was really upset about this, and I don't blame her. She told us about her team that had spent hours carefully crafting a briefing note.

128

00:22:27.880 --> 00:22:34.700

Brent Kerrigan: And after all that time, sent up to the executive, and the executive put it right into the AI model and asked it for a summary.

129

00:22:35.370 --> 00:22:42.209

Brent Kerrigan: There's a word for leaders who do this sort of thing, and it starts with an A. I won't... I won't expand.

130

00:22:42.300 --> 00:22:58.599

Brent Kerrigan: You can ask Claude. But whatever we think of that, the habit does exist, okay? And all of that nuance that we give, all that time, it's still at the mercy of another model. We can't control what happens downstream when we send this stuff up. We can, though, write for it.

131

00:22:59.120 --> 00:23:04.030

Brent Kerrigan: Do the summarizing before the model does, right? Get this stuff in place.

132

00:23:04.100 --> 00:23:22.029

Brent Kerrigan: get it summarized so the AI cannot summarize it any further, put the decision at the top, keep caveats beside the claims they qualify, and don't bury anything that could change

the decision, right? Like those... that emissions claim, right? That comes back to be false, their entire... the entire briefing note is then

133

00:23:22.150 --> 00:23:26.420

Brent Kerrigan: That's kind of, you know, for the circular file. Has to be done again, anyway.

134

00:23:26.590 --> 00:23:39.330

Brent Kerrigan: All right, three things for your next briefing to try. First, get laser focused on the decision which we just mentioned. Focus on that. Second, embrace uncertainty. Work with AI to establish what's sourced and what isn't.

135

00:23:39.390 --> 00:23:47.080

Brent Kerrigan: And third, be open to having your thinking challenged every step of the way. I think it leads to a better process.

136

00:23:47.280 --> 00:23:53.769

Brent Kerrigan: AI can help with almost every stage of the briefing preparation. The responsibility for the advice still sits with us, though.

137

00:23:53.980 --> 00:24:02.390

Brent Kerrigan: If you like what you saw here, we have workshops. One's coming up in January. All the information's on the page. We've got team workshops as well. We do, at all times.

138

00:24:02.810 --> 00:24:13.280

Brent Kerrigan: Again, information's on the page. I have really enjoyed trying to present this to you, and now I send it back to you and any questions you may have.

139

00:24:14.270 --> 00:24:19.889

Amelia Paltridge: Amazing. Thank you so much for that brilliant presentation, Brenton. It was so nice to do the sort of walk.

140

00:24:19.920 --> 00:24:23.499

Amelia Paltridge: walkthrough of all the different steps that you took there.

141

00:24:23.500 --> 00:24:46.179

Amelia Paltridge: And I can see some questions in there as well, so I'm going to try and get through a couple of those before the end of this session. Before I dive into those, I want to let you know we've created a great follow-on resource from today's topic that we think you'll find useful, which is an insights article exploring the decisions and the trade-offs behind building a purpose-built AI tool for policy research.

142

00:24:46.180 --> 00:25:10.470

Amelia Paltridge: And to receive that link to the Insights article, go to the AI and Government Community on the Apolitical platform that was linked in the chat as well, and leave a comment on the post pinned at the top of the page. We'll then send you the resource by email after this event. So my colleague will pop a link to that as well in the chat for you to go and comment there for the resource. Right, I'm going to speed into the Q&A to try and get

143

00:25:10.490 --> 00:25:15.830

Amelia Paltridge: at least two, I think, questions out the way in the last, last few minutes. It's a lot, I know.

144

00:25:15.830 --> 00:25:16.280

Brent Kerrigan: know.

145

00:25:16.280 --> 00:25:18.230

Amelia Paltridge: I know.

146

00:25:18.260 --> 00:25:30.279

Amelia Paltridge: I'm going to jump first, into a question from Judith, which is, how do we stop AI overpopulating with superfluous information? For me, it often gives way more information, that is... that...

147

00:25:30.280 --> 00:25:41.920

Amelia Paltridge: may or may not be helpful, which is irritating. I tried to prompt it out of this, but it seems defaulted to do this, and I guess that sort of plays into one of the failures that you highlighted at the start, Brent, so if you have any thoughts on that.

148

00:25:42.390 --> 00:25:56.920

Brent Kerrigan: Sure, two things on that. Thank you for the question. I also continue to struggle with that. One of the things that really bothers me is that sometimes you give it instructions, and it does a good job for about 10 minutes, and then it reverts back,

149

00:25:57.550 --> 00:26:13.760

Brent Kerrigan: But one thing I do find that is helpful, I don't have it open in front of me, but setting the, like, the master settings in whatever model you're working in, I find that it works better in Claude than it does for ChatGPT, Perplexity.

150

00:26:14.040 --> 00:26:18.380

Brent Kerrigan: Those master settings are really, really important, and I think it's...

151

00:26:18.380 --> 00:26:42.770

Brent Kerrigan: It's crucial to say exactly what you want. A lot of people suffer with this. I also suffer with sycophancy and the AI telling you all the things, how great you are. And I love that. I mean, I could take that all day. But no, it's annoying when you're trying to get work done. But you can also get your settings in there and what kind of voice do you want that. So start there and then I think it's a process always of just saying.

152

00:26:43.290 --> 00:26:53.850

Brent Kerrigan: Focus, focus, focus. I don't want this other information. Sorry, I know that's kind of a brief answer, but I know we want to get to a couple.

153

00:26:53.850 --> 00:27:05.150

Amelia Paltridge: That's good, thank you, Brent. Brill. And then the next one, I'd like to ask is just, outside of that sort of copy and paste prompt that you gave, are there any...

154

00:27:05.170 --> 00:27:21.240

Amelia Paltridge: things that you sometimes tweak or add in, when you're using it that people should know about, and sort of on that, someone's asked as well if you ever ask your model about, like, political influences to decision-making and certain... give it certain instructions in that respect.

155

00:27:21.850 --> 00:27:34.819

Brent Kerrigan: So this is slippery territory, because what I will do with it depends on my client. I'm a contractor, so if I'm told not to use AI, I'm not using it at all, to be honest with you.

156

00:27:34.890 --> 00:27:41.289

Brent Kerrigan: But if you are allowed to do it, be careful what permissions that you have, what connectors you have hooked up.

157

00:27:41.290 --> 00:28:06.230

Brent Kerrigan: If you are, let's say your principal, let's say I had a speaker that told me something in confidence, but it would impact the event. Let's say she didn't really like somebody on the panel or she really liked somebody on the panel. And I put that into the AI. Now that is now out there. We think it's not, but treat AI like you would most free email. It is a postcard. No matter what they say, I would treat

158

00:28:06.230 --> 00:28:18.440

Brent Kerrigan: Be careful. I will use anonymous names if I have to. If you really want to get some of that stuff in there, just put X, Y, and Z, whatever the name is, instead of the real person's name.

159

00:28:18.970 --> 00:28:34.019

Amelia Paltridge: Yeah. Amazing. Thank you so much. Wonderful. And just final one actually, just before I wrap up. We also had a question of, what your preferred AI system is. I know you mentioned it varies depending on the day really with you, but Yeah.

160

00:28:34.020 --> 00:28:35.740

Brent Kerrigan: Yes.

161

00:28:35.740 --> 00:28:39.290

Amelia Paltridge: Favourites for different things, then now's the time to... Yes.

162

00:28:39.290 --> 00:28:55.799

Brent Kerrigan: Okay, so for me, it tends to go in weeks. And for a long time, it was ChatGPT and then Claude. Claude, to me, was the better writer for a long, long time in terms of really fleshing out what I could...

163

00:28:56.060 --> 00:29:07.900

Brent Kerrigan: You know, speaking to me in a language that I would understand instead of a robotic one. Chat has also gotten better, but lately I've been using Perplexity a lot because you can choose the model.

164

00:29:07.900 --> 00:29:30.980

Brent Kerrigan: And I've got a paid subscription to those ones. And this is my job now, so I wouldn't recommend this for everybody. But also one for Gemini. And what I really like about Gemini is I created a great prompt for panel discussions so that it fully researches who else is sitting on a panel for whatever speaker that I'm doing, their past speeches, predicting some of the things that they might add.

165

00:29:31.060 --> 00:29:38.090

Brent Kerrigan: Gemini is really, really great for that. But if I had to choose an everyday one, it would be Perplexity or ChatGPT.

166

00:29:38.540 --> 00:29:42.729

Amelia Paltridge: Yeah, amazing. Thank you so much, Brent.

167

00:29:43.000 --> 00:29:54.440

Amelia Paltridge: Wonderful, and I guess you also just touched on that, but there was just a question that came through of, can you use AI to prepare you to present the briefing or anticipated questions and stuff like that? I assume that's a yes, kind of.

168

00:29:54.440 --> 00:30:05.790

Brent Kerrigan: Let me tell you, I wish I had another 15 minutes, another 20 minutes to show you, because I just did a talk on this, about how you can use

169

00:30:05.790 --> 00:30:14.989

Brent Kerrigan: I use ChatGPT, but to do... to stage a mock interview. Let's say I'm doing this particular.

170

00:30:15.250 --> 00:30:32.550

Brent Kerrigan: conversation, this interview, and now I didn't use it for this, I'm quite comfortable with this, but if I did, I could, you know, feed the questions into ChatGPT, it would ask me live, using voice, and I would give the answer, and it would evaluate. I've got a set of instructions for that as well.

171

00:30:32.610 --> 00:30:35.879

Brent Kerrigan: I could talk about this stuff all day, Amelia.

172

00:30:35.880 --> 00:30:38.730

Amelia Paltridge: Brilliant. No, I know, I know, and I'm sad we don't have a...

173

00:30:38.730 --> 00:30:39.100

Brent Kerrigan: also.

174

00:30:39.100 --> 00:30:40.490

Amelia Paltridge: Part 2 but hopefully.

175

00:30:40.490 --> 00:30:45.399

Brent Kerrigan: Hit me up on LinkedIn. Anybody that's got questions or through the Apolitical Forum for sure.

176

00:30:45.400 --> 00:31:10.320

Amelia Paltridge: Exactly, there's lots of places we can continue this conversation offline. Thank you so much to everyone for taking time in the session today, and to Brent for everything you've said. Our team is going to pull up a quick poll just to find out how you felt about today as well, before you head off, which just helps us continue improving our content for you, so we appreciate any responses, to that. And just to let you know as well, some future events and bits

177

00:31:10.320 --> 00:31:17.999

Amelia Paltridge: going on. Next week, we have two events, a replay of how to improve your strategic thinking on navigating complexity and making better decisions.

178

00:31:18.000 --> 00:31:42.979

Amelia Paltridge: And then we have how to communicate effectively with a busy manager on better communicating your ideas, priorities, and concerns to your manager. And we also have one for hacks for working with Power BI on turning messy data into clear dashboards and reports later on in October. Those are on the website and they're also posted in the chat. Thank you so much for everyone for your questions today to Brent again for taking the time and giving such

179

00:31:42.980 --> 00:31:55.909

Amelia Paltridge: interesting insights. Thank you, everyone who's made today happen. Keep an eye out for an email with a recording as well. I know someone asked that in the chat. Yes, you will get a recording via email and the resources as well from today's.

180

00:31:55.910 --> 00:32:07.400

Amelia Paltridge: event, so don't forget to comment under my post in the AI in Government community, and we really hope to see you at another Apolitical event soon. Have a great rest of your day, everyone. Thanks so much!

181

00:32:07.420 --> 00:32:09.070

Brent Kerrigan: Thank you, bye-bye.

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