

AI FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Mastering Prompts

Sound familiar?

**"More time
chasing updates
than moving work
forward."**

**"Plans, risks and
comms that
fall out of
alignment the
moment priorities
shift."**

AI should ensure you can be more effective – not add more work.

**LIBERATION FROM
COGNITIVE LOAD.**

Prompts you can use before you close your laptop today.

**Working on the most basic
model you've been given.**

The access gap

THE HUMAN PROBLEM:

Some have tools, some have nothing.

THE GOVERNANCE PROBLEM:

Unsanctioned tools expose data.

**ONE SOLUTION: Secure,
open source AI capabilities.**

THE BIGGEST VARIABLE

Research suggests prompt quality is one of the biggest variables in output quality, independent of the model you use.

The anatomy of a prompt

1

ROLE

Who

2

TASK

What

3

CONTEXT

Background

4

FORMAT

How

Before: Write a project update.

After: PMO lead. One-paragraph board update on a delayed milestone. Honest, confident, under 80 words.

THE LABRADOR

Enthusiastic. Wants everything to succeed.
Prone to telling you what you want to hear.

*"You are a supportive
programme director.
What would strengthen this
plan?"*

THE CYNIC

Sceptical. Forensic.
Asks the questions nobody else will.

*"You are a battle-hardened
reviewer who has rejected
ten programmes. What's wrong
with this plan?"*

Good teams need both. You can summon either in seconds.

The Multi-Window Technique

THE LABRADOR WINDOW

"You are a supportive programme director. What would strengthen this?"

THE CYNIC WINDOW

"You are a Treasury analyst who has rejected proposals like this. What will make you say no?"

THE OUTSIDER WINDOW

"You are a frontline manager who wasn't consulted. What concerns you?"

Paste the same document into all three. Or, stack the responses.

The first response is a draft. Not the deliverable.



PROMPT

Send: role, task,
context, format.



REVIEW

What's right?
What's missing?



REFINE

Correct it in the
same
conversation.



POLISH

Ask for the
format you
actually need.

Staying in the same conversation preserves context. Each nudge builds on the last.

Reverse Engineering

Don't know how to phrase it? Ask the model (or another model...)

"You are an expert prompt engineer. I need to write a project closure report for a public sector programme. Ask me five questions to help you write the perfect prompt for this task."

Don't guess what the model needs to know – just ask it.

Close the gap.

FEW-SHOT EXAMPLES

Show the output you want before asking for it.

CHAIN OF THOUGHT

Add "think step by step" – measurably improves complex tasks.

CONSTRAIN THE OUTPUT

"Exactly five points. One sentence each. No introduction."

DOUBLE-SHOT PROMPTING

Repeat your key instruction at the end of your prompt.

Bonus: Separate instructions from content.
Wrap pasted documents in [DOCUMENT START] ... [DOCUMENT END]

What to use it for today.

RED-TEAM YOUR WORK

Ask the cynic what's weak before the board sees it.

MEETING PREP

Paste agenda + minutes. Get decisions, risks, questions.

DIFFICULT COMMS

Draft the delay update that's honest and builds confidence.

SUMMARISE DOCUMENTS

40 pages in. Two-page executive summary out.

LESSONS LEARNED

Rough notes in. Structured board report out.

WHAT WILL YOU CHANGE ABOUT YOUR PROMPTS TODAY?

Assign a role

Expect to iterate

Give full context

Ask it to prompt itself

Define the format

Use multiple windows

Show an example

Protect sensitive data

Each of these requires minimal effort.

The Prompts

THE LABRADOR

"You are a supportive programme director. What would strengthen this plan?"

THE CYNIC

"You are a battle-hardened reviewer who has rejected ten programmes. What's wrong with this plan?"

THE OUTSIDER

"You are a frontline manager who wasn't consulted. What concerns you?"

FOR PLANS

"You are a project manager reviewing these rough notes. Identify the key milestones, flag any missing dependencies, and produce a structured first-draft plan."

FOR RISK GAPS

"You are a delivery assurance reviewer. What risks and dependencies are missing from this plan that a programme board would expect to see?"

COMMODITISE THE CAPABILITY

These prompts are the underlying patterns. Share them. A prompt library shared across your team commoditises the skill.

Session prompts available on request.