



Email Course

Topic: Prompting GenAI

Course overview

Day 1: Using a formula (Task + Context + Format + Tone)

Day 2: Assigning a role to the AI

Day 3: Getting formatted results

Day 4: Chaining prompts

Day 5: Iterating

Day 1: Get better results with this prompt formula

The problem

A lot of people have trouble getting good results using generative AI tools (like Copilot). But the tool isn't always the problem. Often, the prompt is too broad to produce the intended result.

A prompt is simply the instruction you give the AI. And the "garbage-in, garbage-out" rule applies. Fuzzy instructions? You'll probably get fuzzy results. By making the instructions as clear as possible, you'll probably get better, more useful results.

Compare these two prompts:

- Fuzzy prompt: "Write an email to my team."
- Clear prompt: "Write a professional email to my project team explaining that the product launch will be delayed by two weeks due to supply chain issues. The tone should be transparent and supportive."

The stronger prompt is going to get much better results because it gives the AI:

- Context
- Audience
- Objective
- Tone

A simple solution

This prompting formula will improve your results with AI:

Task + Context + Format + Tone

Here is the formula in action:

"Summarize the following meeting notes (task) for senior leadership (context) in bullet points (format) using a concise professional tone (tone)."

Try it

Use this prompt in Copilot: "Provide expert advice on how to deliver a compelling presentation on [enter your topic here] to my teammates."

Check your inbox tomorrow to learn **a framework you can use to get consistent results from AI!**

Day 2: Make AI your subject matter expert

The problem

You seldom have a subject matter expert always on hand to answer your questions and give you ideas.

A simple solution

You can ask AI to play the part! This is called **assigning a role to the AI**.

Compare these two prompts:

- Basic prompt: "Give me marketing ideas."
- Role-assigned prompt: "Act as a digital marketing strategist. Suggest five campaign ideas for a product launch targeting small business owners."

Why is this so? A role prompt helps the AI to:

- Narrow the response
- Use expert-level reasoning
- Produce more relevant outputs

Here are some examples of roles that might be helpful to you:

- Marketing strategist
- Data analyst
- HR advisor
- Project manager
- Executive coach

Try it

Use this prompt in Copilot: "Act as a project management expert. Create a simple project timeline for launching a new employee onboarding program."

Check your inbox tomorrow to learn **how to get structured outputs like reports, plans, and frameworks from AI!**

Day 3: Get structured results from AI

The problem

You probably apply specific formats within your documents to make them easy to scan, read, and understand. With AI, you get what you ask for. If you're not specific about how to format AI's output, you may end up with a literal pile of text or figures that you'd probably have to copy, paste, and format yourself.

A simple solution

When you're writing your prompt, **tell the AI exactly how to format the answer.**

Compare these two prompts:

- No structure requested: "Explain how AI can improve customer support."
- Structure requested: "Explain how AI can improve customer support. Present the answer as a table with three columns for focus area, suggestion, and expected result."

Here are some examples of formats you can request for AI output:

- tables
- bullet lists
- frameworks
- checklists
- step-by-step processes

Try it

Use this prompt in Copilot: "List five ways AI can help teams communicate. Present the results in a table with columns for method, benefit, and example."

Check your inbox tomorrow to learn **an advanced prompting technique used by AI experts: chaining!**

Day 4: Chain prompts to get more from AI

The problem

Good as it is, AI usually can't produce a finished product that perfectly fills every requirement in just one try. A single prompt will rarely get you where you need to go.

A simple solution

People who can use AI on the regular and get great results do something called **prompt chaining**. They break down a complex task into a multiple manageable prompts.

Let's say the assignment is writing a blog post about AI in healthcare.

Compare these two prompts:

- Generic prompt: "Write a blog post about AI in healthcare."
- Specialized prompts: Creating a prompt chain.
 - Prompt #1: "Generate five blog post ideas about AI in healthcare."
 - Prompt #2: "Create an outline for [the most compelling idea]."
 - Prompt #3: "Write the introduction."
 - Prompt #4: "Expand section two with examples."

Prompt chaining is great for creating these outputs with AI's help:

- Reports
- Strategy documents
- Marketing content
- Research summaries

Try it

Here is a short prompt chain you can experiment with:

1. "Generate five productivity tips using AI."
2. "Turn tip #2 into a LinkedIn post."

Day 5: Refine AI's results by iterating

The problem

You already know that you can rarely achieve prompting perfection on the first try. Even if you break down the full result you want into small requests, there's usually always something that needs improvement. Generally, you shouldn't consider anything AI generates to be ready for prime-time without a little sparkle and shine.

A simple solution

There is a way you can get AI to do the heavy lifting for you when your results aren't quite right. **Iterate**. Keep adding more requirements each time.

Here's a good example. Let's say you enter the first prompt (#1 below), and the AI returns very general information in response. Simply continue prompting to refine the output, adding specific instructions in each prompt:

- Prompt #1: "Explain how AI improves marketing."
- Prompt #2: "Focus specifically on B2B marketing examples."
- Prompt #3: "Add real-world business use cases."
- Prompt #4: "Turn the response into a presentation outline."

Try it

Use this prompt in Copilot: "Act as a productivity expert. Identify five ways a manager could use AI to save at least five hours per week."

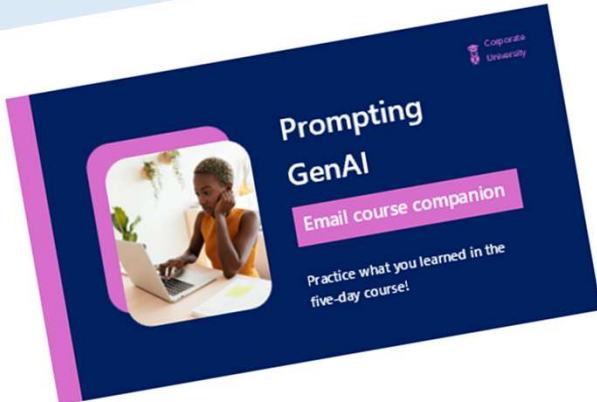
What came back? Could it be better? How so? Does it need more data, more detail, maybe step-by-step instructions? Keep prompting until you get what you need for your final product.

You've made it through the week! You've got five lessons you can return to any time you need to sharpen your prompting skills. As if that weren't enough, here are two additional resources to help you become a more proficient prompter:

- Email course companion [link]
- High-value prompts for business professionals [link]


Additional resources

The **Email Course Companion** provides more examples and practice on each of the five concepts taught in the course.



1. The Core Prompt Formula
Use this simple structure when writing prompts.
Task + Context + Format + Tone
Example:
Weak prompt
Write an email about the project delay.
Improved prompt
Write an email explaining a two-week project delay due to supply chain issues. The audience is a cross-functional team. Use a professional and reassuring tone and present the message in three short paragraphs.

2. The Role Prompt Technique
Assign the AI a role to produce more expert-level responses.
Act as + Expert Role + Task



1. Write a clear executive email
Act as a senior communications advisor. Draft a concise email to senior leadership explaining [issue]. Include the business impact, recommended next steps, and a professional tone.

2. Turn meeting notes into a polished summary
Summarize the following meeting notes for an executive audience. Present the results as bullet points: Key Decisions, Action Items, and Risks.

3. Rewrite a draft
Act as a professional editor. Rewrite the following message to be clearer, more concise, and more persuasive while maintaining a professional tone.

4. Perform a SWOT analysis
Act as a strategy consultant. Conduct a SWOT analysis for the following business idea: [idea or product].

5. Evaluate a business decision
Analyze the following proposal and identify potential risks, benefits, and unanswered questions from a leadership perspective.

20 High-Value AI Prompts provides prompts that any member of our workforce can use to get help from GenAI.