SKILLTECH ACADEMY / PRACTICAL AI GUIDES

BOOK 02

Better Prompts, Better Answers

Write clearer requests and build a prompt you can check

6 chapters / 5 tutorials / 20 prompts

10 teaching figures and a practical project

FIRST EDITION / 22 OCTOBER 2026

22 October 2026 / English

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Find the lesson you need

Work through the chapters, then build and test your own reusable prompt. The ten figures sit beside their related lessons.

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Copyable prompts P01-P20 are also supplied in the separate plain-text file. Bracketed fields must be replaced before use.

Reference answers and figures are authored teaching examples. Check your own replies against the supplied sources.

START HERE

What this book helps you do

A useful prompt describes a job clearly enough for you to judge the result. This book helps you improve requests that produce vague, generic or inconsistent answers. You will practise choosing context, setting an audience, defining a format and making focused revisions.

The six chapters build towards one reusable prompt for a task you actually repeat. You will compare three versions against the same facts and the same checklist, then try missing and contradictory inputs.

How to work through it

1. Read the explanation, copy the numbered prompt and supply the stated fictional input.

2. Keep the reply you actually receive. Compare it with the answer key; wording can differ.

3. Make the suggested revision. Record which requirement improved and which still failed.

Examples are fictional and authored, not ChatGPT transcripts. Check replies against the supplied sources. These text exercises need no API setup.

You only need a text conversation for these exercises. This book assumes you can already start one. It does not require a paid subscription, connected apps, image generation or a particular model.

Reading route

Chapters 1-2: diagnose the request and choose context. Chapters 3-4: control the audience, format and examples. Chapters 5-6: compare revisions and build a reusable template. Finish with the practical project, glossary and completion checklist.

FICTIONAL PRACTICE CASE

Keep one set of facts

We will return to this workshop case when comparing prompt versions. Every name, booking and amount is fictional. Copy these facts unchanged whenever a prompt asks for the benchmark input.

Field	Approved fact
Business	ClearWheel Workshop
Booking	CW-214; city bicycle
Original collection	24 October 2026 at 10:00
New collection	24 October 2026 at 15:00
Reason	Replacement brake cable arrives later
Price	Quoted R480; unchanged
Customer action	Confirm the new time or request a callback

Information we do not have

There is no customer name, telephone number, address, discount or delivery offer. There is no confirmation that the customer accepts the change. A draft must not quietly add any of these.

Six checks for the finished message

Check the booking; the date and both time roles; the reason; the unchanged R480; the requested reply; and a clear message of no more than 80 words. Any invented promise fails the facts check even if the wording sounds polished.

A correct result can use different sentences from our reference. The purpose of the checklist is to judge what the reply communicates.

CHAPTER 1

Diagnose a weak request

Before rewriting a disappointing prompt, name the defect in the answer. 'It is bad' gives you little to change. 'It promises delivery that I never offered' identifies a factual boundary. 'It sounds like an advert' identifies a tone problem.

Start with the task in one sentence. What should exist when the work is done: a customer message, a comparison, an action list or a draft explanation? Then identify the information the answer depends on. If the task needs an agreed collection time, the prompt needs that time.

Separate three kinds of failure

What you observe	What to inspect
Wrong or added facts	Missing inputs, unclear source limits or a reply that ignored them
Correct facts, awkward result	Audience, tone, length and output format
Inconsistent results	Ambiguous rules, conflicting instructions or an insufficient test

A missing source, unavailable tool or model mistake can also cause failure. If the prompt already states the right fact, correct the reply and test again.

Try this now

Take one weak answer you have kept. Underline one sentence you cannot use. Write the specific requirement it broke. Change the part of the prompt responsible for that requirement before adding anything else.

Our first tutorial repairs a request that never supplied enough information to write an accurate customer update.

Turn a vague job into a draft

The weak request

Tell the customer about the delay.

That request leaves the booking, timing, price and next action unspecified. An answer may fill the gaps with plausible details. In this exercise, make the essential facts available instead.

Run the improved request

P01 Collection change message

Write a short customer message for ClearWheel Workshop using only these fictional facts.
Booking: CW-214, city bicycle.
Original collection: 24 October 2026 at 10:00.
New collection: 24 October 2026 at 15:00.
Reason: the replacement brake cable arrives later.
The quoted R480 is unchanged.
Ask the customer to confirm the new time or request a callback.
Use plain, friendly English, no more than 80 words. Return the message only. Do not add a customer name, contact details, delivery, discount or a claim that the customer has agreed.

Before you read the reference

Copy the actual reply into a note. Circle the new time and underline the price. Does the wording clearly explain that 15:00 replaces 10:00 on the same date? Is the customer asked to reply? Check the complete message, not just those two strings.