

Prompt library starter

Not an empty template. Five prompts for the tasks most office jobs actually repeat, ready to adapt.

The point isn't the wording. It's that you stop re-explaining yourself every time. Save the ones that work somewhere you'll find them again — a note, a doc, or your tool's saved-instructions feature if it has one.

How to use this

1. Copy a prompt below.
2. Replace everything in [SQUARE BRACKETS] with your own detail.
3. Run it once. Fix what's wrong with the *prompt*, not the output.
4. Save the fixed version. That's your library.

Step 3 is the one people skip. If the answer is wrong, the instinct is to edit the answer — but then you'll get the same wrong answer next week.

1. Meeting transcript → action items

This is a transcript of a team meeting. Produce three sections:

- **Decisions** — what was actually decided, and by whom.
- **Actions** — each task, its owner, and its due date if one was stated.
- **Open** — anything raised and not resolved.

Use only what's in the transcript. If an owner or a date was never stated, write "not stated" — do not guess. Keep it under [200] words.

Paste the whole transcript, not a summary. Your summary has already thrown away the offhand "*oh, I'll handle that*" that was the only record of who owns the follow-up.

2. The recurring report

Here is [last month's version] of a report I write every [month], and [this month's raw data].

Write this month's version, matching the structure and tone of the previous one. Where a number moved more than [10%], say so and note it. Where you don't have data for a section, write "no data this period" — don't estimate.

The trick is giving it last month's version. Without that it invents a structure, and you spend longer reformatting than writing.

3. Email in your own voice

Draft a reply to the email below.

Here are three emails I've written before, so you can match how I write:

[PASTE THREE]

- Context the sender doesn't have: [WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW].
- The outcome I want: [WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN NEXT].
- Length: [about 100 words].

The three samples do more than any instruction about tone. "Professional but warm" means nothing; three of your actual emails mean everything.

4. The spreadsheet formula

I have a spreadsheet where [describe columns: A is dates, B is amounts...].

I want a formula that [what it should do, in plain words].

Give me the formula for [Excel / Google Sheets], explain what each part does, and tell me what it will do if a cell is empty or contains text instead of a number.

Ask for the formula, not the answer. A formula you can check beats a number you have to trust — and the last line catches the failure that actually bites.

5. Reading something long

Here is a [contract / policy / report]. I need to [decide whether to sign / brief my manager / find the deadlines].

Produce:

- The three things most relevant to that goal
- Anything unusual compared with a standard [document of this type]
- Any dates, amounts, or obligations that fall on [me / us]

Quote the exact wording for anything in the third list. Don't paraphrase obligations.

That last instruction matters more than it looks. Paraphrased obligations are where confident summaries go quietly wrong.

What to add next

Your library should be personal within a month. The candidates are easy to spot: **anything you've now explained to AI more than twice**. That's the signal — not that the task is important, just that it recurs.

Related reading: Build a Reusable AI Assistant for the Task You Do 20 Times a Week and Giving AI Context: The Skill That Actually Makes It Useful