

FIX FIVE BAD PROMPTS USING THE FIVE-PART FORMULA

30 MIN

Objective. Take five vague prompts, rewrite each one using the five-part formula, and document what changed.

CONCEPTS TO KEEP IN MIND

- **A prompt is a specification.** Vague prompts produce vague output. Specific prompts produce useful output.
- **The five parts:** Context · Specific Details · Intent · Desired Format · Constraints. Missing parts are where quality breaks.
- **You don't need every part every time.** But ask yourself which one a vague prompt is missing — usually it's *Constraints* or *Desired Format*.
- **Rewrites should produce different output, not just longer prompts.** If the rewrite doesn't measurably change the result, the original wasn't actually broken.

SCENARIO

Most “AI doesn't work for me” complaints come from prompts that didn't ask for anything specific. You'll fix five of them today — including some you've probably written yourself.

SOURCE MATERIAL

Pick **five** vague prompts. Sources to mine:

- Your own chat history (look for one-liners you typed in a hurry)
- Google “ChatGPT prompts” and grab the worst ones from any list
- Common ones to start with:
 - “Write a marketing email.”
 - “Help me with my LinkedIn profile.”
 - “Make this sound better.”
 - “Summarize this article.”
 - “Give me ideas for [thing].”

PROMPTS TO TRY

For each vague prompt, run the original first, then the rewrite. The point is the *contrast*.

[Original]

Write a marketing email.

[Rewrite using the five-part formula]

[Context] I run a small mobile car detailing business in western North Carolina. My customers are mostly homeowners aged 35–65 who value convenience.

[Specific Details] I'm launching a winter package: undercarriage rust protection, interior deep clean, and headlight restoration for \$199 (regular price \$275).

[Intent] Write a marketing email to my existing customer list announcing this package.

[Desired Format] Subject line + 3 short paragraphs + a clear call-to-action button text.

[Constraints] Conversational tone. Under 200 words. No emojis. Avoid the word "exclusive."

When the rewrite is harder than the original, that's the work. Specifying *Context* and *Constraints* is where most of the lift comes from — it's also where most lazy prompts skip.

DELIVERABLE

A document (Doc, Notion page, scratchpad) with:

1. Five before-and-after prompt pairs
2. One sentence per pair: which of the five parts the original was missing, and what the rewrite added
3. Optional: a one-line note on which output you'd actually keep

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

- Rewrites are 2–5x longer than originals — and the extra length is *all* specifics.
- For each prompt, you can name which part (Context, Specific Details, Intent, Format, Constraints) was the missing piece.
- The rewrites produce noticeably better output. If they don't, the rewrite isn't real — try again.
- You catch yourself wanting to use the formula on tomorrow's prompts before you've finished today's exercise. That's the muscle locking in.

Deliverable. A side-by-side document showing five before-and-after prompt pairs, each with one sentence on what the rewrite added and why.