

DIRECT prompting



How you ask determines what you get back. The same request, phrased vaguely, returns something generic; phrased with the task, the information and the result you want, it returns something you can actually use. Prompting is the difference between treating AI like a search engine and working with it like a digital colleague.

DIRECT is a prompting framework to narrow the scope of the output you need. There are 6 elements that each contribute to a well-articulated prompt, but you will not need all six every time.

D

Doing

What is the task? Give it a title and a one-line description. Nothing more complicated than that.

I

Information

What does it need in order to do the task well? A document, a link, a screenshot, the numbers, the details only you have.

R

Role / Persona

Who do you need it to be? Name the background, experience and skills you want answering you.

E

End goal / Result

Why are you doing this, and what should the finished result look like when it lands?

C

Context

What is unique about this situation? What happened last time? Relevant, but not required to complete the task.

T

Tone / Style / Format

How should it sound, and what form should the output take? Bullets, a paragraph, a spreadsheet, a slide, an image.

HOW TO USE IT

Treat DIRECT as a checklist. Run through it when you are writing a prompt, when you are building a workflow, and when you are building out an agent.