

# How to talk to AI

What to consider at each stage of your prompt.

R · role B · brief S · style F · format

## **R** Role

Who should write this?

- What job title or role fits the task best?
- What sector or industry should they know?
- How much experience, and what kind?
- Which single skill matters most: writing, analysis, strategy, or communication?
- Internal voice ("our marketing manager") or external ("a consultant specialising in...")?

## **B** Brief

What do you need?

- What exactly is the output? Email, report, talking points, social post...
- Who is it for? Board, funders, customers, colleagues, volunteers...
- What context would AI not already know?
- What constraints matter? Word count, sensitivities, must-include points.
- What does success look like — if it were perfect, what would be true?
- Any placeholders AI should use where you'll fill in specifics later?

## **S** Style

How should it sound?

- Who should it sound like? A colleague, a trusted adviser, a sector peer.
- Who should it NOT sound like? A corporate comms team, a consultant, a robot.
- Name specific phrases or habits to avoid.
- What register: formal, conversational, or somewhere in between?
- Short sentences, or longer and more detailed?
- Should it use "we", "you", "I", or third person?

## **F** Format

What should it look like?

- Total length: word count, or "no more than one page".
- Structure: paragraphs, headings, numbered steps, bullets.
- What to start with: a summary, a hook, the key finding
- What to end with: a call to action, a next step, or just stop?
- What NOT to include: no intro, no summary, no sign-off, no commentary.
- Output type if it matters: email with subject line, markdown, plain text.



### SHOW, DON'T TELL

If you have an example of what good looks like, attach it. Examples do the heavy lifting.



### START META IF YOU'RE STUCK

Ask: "How do I write a prompt so you [goal]? What questions do you have for me?"



### ITERATE, DON'T REWRITE

Your first result is a starting point. Tell AI what to change ("shorter, drop the intro, less formal") rather than starting over.