PROMPTING DISCIPLINE

Put *Trust* Into Your Prompts

Four simple tests that change the quality of what you get back — by changing the standard you set before you ask.

Most people think prompting is about finding the right words. I don't. I think it's about setting the right standard.

AI is remarkably good at meeting expectations — the problem is that most of us never give it any. We ask ordinary questions, then wonder why we get ordinary answers.

THE FOUR TESTS

01 Set the standard

The way you frame the assignment changes the work you receive. Not because the machine suddenly becomes smarter — because you've changed the benchmark it's reaching for. Standards matter. Machines are no exception.

PROMPT

> *"Imagine I'm paying you $50,000 to create this for a high-net-worth audience. It must be groundbreaking, premium and free of generic advice. Before you begin, tell me what a $50,000 version does differently from a free one — then create it at that standard."*

02 Never accept the first draft

The first answer is rarely the best answer — that's true of people too. Ask it to become its own editor. Not for more criticism. For better judgment. There is a difference.

PROMPT

> *"You are a world-class editor whose reputation depends on honest judgment. Critique what you just wrote — only the weaknesses that actually matter, ranked by impact. Then rewrite it. Repeat this critique-and-rewrite cycle three times before giving me the final version."*

03 Ask for confidence, not just answers

Confidence is not certainty. Far from it. After any factual or research-heavy response, ask where it might be wrong. Trust grows when uncertainty is made visible — not hidden.

PROMPT

> *"Which three claims are you least confident about? Rate your confidence in each, explain why, and tell me exactly how I should verify each one and which sources I should consult."*

04 Turn up the intelligence

The same prompt produces very different work depending on whether speed or reasoning is prioritised. Intelligence is something you choose to access.

TRY THIS

> *"Run the same problem twice — first on the default fast model, then on a reasoning-focused model with higher thinking effort. Nothing changes except how much thinking it's allowed to do. Sometimes that changes everything."*

THE PRINCIPLE

Prompting isn't really about prompts. It's about expectations. The quality of what comes back is a reflection of the standard you were willing to set before you asked the question — and that principle reaches far beyond any single tool.

REMEMBER THIS

The quality of a response often tells you more about the ambition of the person asking than the capability of the model answering.

SET THE STANDARD FIRST — THE ANSWER FOLLOWS

This guide is one of a series of practical tools produced by The Fifth Chair. For more insights on this subject, or to explore how The Fifth Chair can support your business, contact us at hello@5thchair.com.